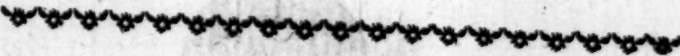




MASQUERADES;

O R,

WHAT YOU WILL.



MASQUERADES

WHAT YOU WILL



MASQUERADES;

OR,

WHAT YOU WILL.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF ELIZA WARWICK, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. II.



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MDCCCXXXI.

MASQUERADES,

&c.



To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor.

I Have not had a minute before this present one to inform you how I go on:—a longer silence will draw on me your execrations. My spirits are too much discomposed to write with any sort of method; yet make the best of what I send you, and be thankful that I use an effort to gratify your impatience.

On alighting from my chaise last Monday evening, Mortimer met me with open arms, and a countenance on which pleasure danced.

“These happy features, dear Mortimer, bespeak some comfort to your friend! Dare I trust my senses? You have sympathized in my misery; perhaps you have now cause to do so from a contrary effect.—Is your fair sister less cruel?”——“I rejoice, Osmond, to tell you (if I can judge from appearances), that Julia is not so *indifferent* as you and I imagined.—For a while be cautious not to give room for suspicion that you are her lover. The Duke of Suffolk is hourly expected here:—her family seem determined to encourage his addresses;—could they suppose you stood in”——“By heaven! I would have all the world suppose I will dispute so valuable a treasure with him.—Shall

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I look

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I look tamely on, and see him rob me of the woman I doat on to madness?—My Lord, I did not believe you thought me so abject.”

“Be patient, dear Osmond, and hear me.”——

“You reason coolly, who know not what I suffer. —“*Suffolk expected hourly! and her family seem determined to encourage his addresses!*”——Do I not know, then, what I have to expect?—Is not Lady Julia all condescension to her friends?—No, my Lord;—the union shall never be! So far from disguising my sentiments, I will, the first moment that offers, assert my prior claim; and, if it is rejected,—Suffolk shall feel my vengeance!”

“Pursue your plan;—go and proclaim your passion;—hold your sword to the Duke’s breast;—see what advantages you will reap from so prudent a conduct! Julia will be *favourably* disposed towards a man who possesses such *noble* warmth of temper; who will render her *fame* popular by a duel! The Duke of Westmorland, too, will be *compelled* to authorize your attachment, when, in defiance of his commands, you openly assert your love for an object he disapproves of; indeed, from mercenary motives alone! But, to complete the whole, how readily will Lady Pemberton and her son give my sister to you after so”——

“No more, Mortimer, no more!—Pardon my hastiness—I blush at it!—Tell me how I shall act;—I will be guided implicitly by your counsels.”

“Only thus—Be careful, for a time, to conceal your passion from the prying eyes that will surround you; nay, to blind them the more effectually, countenance the report of your marriage with lady Henrietta; it will be the best security. Trust to Julia a little, in respect of the Duke; she likes him not. When her mother and Pemberton find how insurmountable her aversion to him is, he must be dismissed. You will next propose to them:—you will represent your situation,—your father’s unkindness,——your long attachment to the sweet girl,—your misery without her;—in short, the whole catalogue of speeches pertinent to the occasion, which your seducing manner must assuredly render sufficiently prevalent;—they consent to

to her becoming Lady Osmond ;—you “ *marry and settle in the country.* ”——So concludes *your novel.*—Is it not well laid out, and far more likely to succeed than your *cutting of throats ?* ”

“ Ah, Mortimer, what a scene of delight do you open to my view !—Heaven grant her to me ! and it is all I have to ask.”

“ Courage, my friend !—but, as you value your happiness, be cautious.”

After these restrictions, I was obliged to be very circumspect in my behaviour to Lady Julia, fearing to incur the suspicions Mortimer dreaded, and which I plainly saw might have been fatal to the expectations we had just raised. Flattered by them, and the hope he gave me of her not being *so indifferent as I imagined*, and anxious to be convinced of the certainty of it, I resolved to pursue your advice. I suppressed my sighs, —kept a guard on my eyes,—made a prisoner of my tongue,—and threw aside every tinge that bordered on the *penseroso* ;—I seemed the happiest fellow in the world. As the greatest proof I can give of my obedience to your injunctions, I even went so far as to allow Suffolk opportunities of pleading his suit :—but that was too great an effort to be often repeated ;—more especially as I began to think her *aversion to him* not quite so *insurmountable* as my Lord Mortimer supposed it.—Thus did I yield to a more experienced general ; and what has it availed me ?—Vile prophet !—“ *Lady Julia attached !—She conceals a passion for me, which, in spite of her vigilance, you discovered when you were in London !* ”—Vile prophet !——My Arabian Syphax would make as good an oracle as thou dost.—Oh ! curse my self-sufficiency and arrogance, which caused me to lend an ear to the dear illusion that you adorned with such elegant sophistry !—What a disappointment !——Many instances could I bring to your view, that would put you out of conceit with your penetration ; but the devilish remembrance of them wounds me more than a knowledge of them could your vanity : I will, therefore, spare you and myself some pain, by forbearing an explanation.—One kiss—
one charming kiss I obtained, partly by accident,

partly stratagem.—The extasy I feel at reflecting on the bliss that happy moment bestow, is not to be told.—Montague, *that kiss* has served me to live on many days.—Sweet girl!—the man who calls you his, will possess joys so near those that heaven promises to give, that he will forget he is a mortal; and, when wakened from his delirium by the division of soul and body, only beg of Providence to make him as blessed in the next world as he has been in this.—*That man*—shall be Osmond!—By heaven—by every thing most sacred I swear it!—If she will not be mine with her own consent,—if she still rejects me,—I must carry her off; and, when once in my power, she will rejoice to accept of those terms she has so haughtily despised.—Never was there a more obdurate girl. She has a soul so proud, that one would wonder how Nature could commit such a blot in a work every way else most perfect.——Here, as you have done before, you will try to convince me of my mistake;—you will repeat what you said in London, “She is as gentle as the breath of spring.”—So she is, I grant you, to all but her lovers.——As you have never walked in that line, allow *me* to tell you, she is tyranny itself.——Diana (by the Poets report) disdained not the sex more than Lady Julia does that part of it which aspires to her affections.——It was my fond hope to conciliate them. I once thought I would even refuse her offered hand, if I was not assured she gave me her heart with it.——Convinced now that I cannot obtain it,——still adoring her beyond every earthly good,——and grown less delicate in my notions, from her unconquerable haughtiness,——I am resolved not to be completely disappointed, but endeavour to be as happy as I can, by making myself master of her person;—and, perhaps, in a little time, she may not think her fate wretched in becoming the *wife* of Osmond—for I harbour not an idea against her immaculate virtue. One fortnight more, thou dear angel! I devote to assiduity, to sighs, and supplications;—if at the end thou art still inexorable,——why, *then*, an unlooked-for scene awaits thee.——To say the truth, my thoughts are rather deranged;——I have been dancing all night,—

night,—not with Lady Julia, which is one source of disturbance. On my begging for that honour, I was answered *that she was engaged to the Duke of Suffolk ; but, if the Ladies changed partners, she would readily give me her hand for part of the night.* This being the case, I resolved on playing the politician, and on not engaging her till after supper, when I intended to detain her as my partner during the rest of the ball. It could not appear particular then, especially as I made it a point to dance constantly before with Lady Maria Harley. But the Devil, who owes me a grutch for not enlisting under his banners, frustrated my hopes. I did not dare let Lady Julia know my purpose. I have already dwelled pretty long on her disdain and cruelty : cast your eye over that paragraph, and you will easily guess my reason. However, in some measure to secure her, I implored that she would after supper favour me with a private interview in the presence of Lady Mortimer, with whom I had concerted the plan ; and determined, if the fair-one consented, to seize the opportunity of painting a second time the fervency of my passion, and, in spite of her command “ *to be for ever silent on the subject,*” to urge it with all the eloquence proper for the occasion.—She denied me, Montague,—actually denied me !—yet I should not have given up my request to the last moment, if she had not, in my hearing, and with an intention to aggravate the mortification she had inflicted, assented to become Temple’s partner, tho’, when he offered, I put in my prior claim to that honour. I was disregarded. She presented him her hand, saying, *she had thought to dance no more ; however, fatigued as she was, she could not refuse him.* I almost cursed the whole sex as I turned from her abruptly. My steps mechanically moved towards the cotillon-room, where she was soon to display the graces of her beautiful figure with the preferred Temple. I found Lady Mortimer there, who, seeing me much disturbed, asked the cause ? I evaded a reply, till being urged to speak, I answered,

“ I have no right to complain, my Lady. The man who suffers the illusion of a passion to conquer

his reason, and becomes a voluntary slave, deserves to be treated as the abject wretch he makes himself."

"I suppose Julia has refused your proposal, and *our* scheme falls to the ground!—Well, be not discomposed—I have almost a mind to give you ample revenge, by divulging a conversation that passed between us one morning before you came down to Windsor."

—"I entreat your Ladyship would spare me;—I am heartily wearied of any subject which treats of love."

"I beg pardon, my Lord. Believe me I am glad to be saved a disagreeable business, which nothing but my opinion of you, and your supplications, should have induced me to undertake. Only permit me to remind you, my Lord, that I never *sought* to make Julia the topic of our discourse;—you always led to it:—and *here break we off for ever*, on a subject of which you are *so tired*. However, I admire my sister's penetration and spirit."—She was going from me with great calmness, but I caught her hand. "Stay, dear Lady Mortimer! leave not in despair a miserable madman. Do but hear me,—hear how Lady Julia, that merciless tormentor, has used me; and, instead of displeasure, I shall have your pity." She smiled, and condescended to listen while I related what I have already done in this sheet regarding Lady Julia.——

When I finished, she replied, "*One story is good till we hear the other*. After I am informed of my sister's motive for behaving as you have mentioned, I shall be able to give *judgment*, and probably to deliver it in the words of Sir Roger de Coverley,—"*Much may be said on both sides*."—Notwithstanding her jocularities, I did not escape receiving a very smart lecture from her Ladyship, *for suffering a passionate disposition to gain such an ascendancy over me, as to put reason and politeness to flight*. I promised amendment; and sued to be made acquainted with the conversation she had alluded to: but *she chose to deny me, as a punishment*, she said, *for my impetuosity*.—I could not help shewing an affected indifference to Lady Julia, which, by the bye, I believe she hardly took notice of. I was also *rather gallant* to my first partner, hoping to excite her jealousy; but

but, the heart that is insensible to love, cannot admit any visits from jealousy: of course I gained nothing from my attention to Lady Maria Harley, since neither *love* nor *jealousy* occupied the bosom of Lady Julia.——Negligent as I appeared, I never lost sight of *mia diletta*. I observed her whisper Lady Mortimer; and, in a few minutes after, as she passed me, heard her sigh, and saw her eyes swimming in tears. I would have forfeited mine to have known the cause. She immediately retired, and returned no more.——Though I have watched for opportunities of conversing alone with Mortimer, I never could obtain any: he has studied to avoid me. You can easier imagine, than I describe, my solicitude to know what he meant, the night I arrived here, in saying, *if he might judge from appearances, Julia is not so indifferent as we imagined*. Would I could tell what ground he had for his conjectures! Faith, I have been ready enough to adopt the opinion myself at times, when I have seen that specious, insinuating fellow, Suffolk, on his knees to her. I have found some difficulty on such occasions to curb my *passionate disposition*, according to Lady Mortimer. For example,——when I saw them dance a minuet together not many hours ago, her admiration of him was plain: she threw out all her attractions (and no woman ever possessed so many) to please him;—she looked and danced most divinely. As he led her to her seat, I heard him call her *an angel*.——Think you I could not with pleasure have stabbed him to the heart?

Instead of seeking repose, I shall directly dress myself, order my horses, and, tho' it may be thought cruel to rouse Mortimer from his bed, where he has scarce lain an hour, summon him to accompany me in a ride;—then demand of him the questions he must resolve, and take his advice how to proceed.—For once, in compassion to my sufferings, I will be selfish:—there is no enduring longer this life of uncertainty and misery.

* * * * *

Sunday, Three o'Clock.

I am returned, my dear Charles, something easier than when I laid down my pen.—I have opened my whole soul to Mortimer;—I reproached him for his unkind distance;—I conjured him no longer to delay acquainting me with the reason he had for reviving my hopes at our meeting, and expressed great apprehension that his wishes for my success had made him too sanguine, and view things in a false light. Thus he replied :

“ I should never have flattered myself, or you, into a belief of happiness, unless I had substantial proofs to support it. What those proofs are, I cannot reveal;—nor will you again ask me, when you are told that the confidence of another must be betrayed ere you can come at the knowledge you desire.—I certainly have evaded a *tête-à-tête* with you, because I wanted to elude the very interrogation you have just now made; and had great hopes that your penetration and assiduity would have rendered it unnecessary to seek an answer from *me*.—You complain of Julia's treatment;—are you sure, Osmond, there is no fault on your side? You have never been explicit with her since you saw her in London, you say—was that well? Should you not have caught the first moment that offered, after my hint to you *that I believed her not indifferent*, to have discovered whether my judgment was erroneous, or you were *really* the happy man I thought you? In my opinion, such *tardiness*, such *nonchalance*, betrays no very great depth of affection.”

“ What could I do, dear Mortimer, when she would afford me no opportunity of making such a discovery? If I hinted my attachment, she silenced me with scorn, or flew my presence. Last night I solicited an interview; in the most arbitrary manner she refused”——

“ On my soul, I do not condemn her?”

“ How, my Lord!”

“ I do not indeed: your gallantry to Lady Maria Harley was so warm, that it seemed past a jest; and, faith, you must have had good courage to expect a favourable answer from Julia to a request of the sort, at
the

the time you were making downright love to another in so public manner.—I have not exchanged six words with Lady Julia since we met at dinner yesterday; therefore am (upon my honour) ignorant whether she took notice of it: but your attention to your partner was so glaring, that I held it certain your affections were transferred to her, and never expected to have heard further from you on our present theme.”

“Did not your Lordship, on my alighting from my chaise last Monday, recommend to me to conceal my attachment to your sister? Did you not inforce the *injunction* with the most solemn assurance that my happiness with her depend upon it? I could not engage Lady Julia’s ear amidst a throng, without going in opposition to your advice; and only acted conformably to it, in blinding all around me by an affected assiduity to Lady Maria. Her person, every one thought, made an impression on me; or, at any rate, your family and my rivals will, in consequence of my particularity last night, imagine, that I pay homage to beauty where ever I find it, and be the less suspicious, if they observe in future my attention to Lady Julia Herbert.”

“In recommending caution to you, I only meant that you should use it with those around you; and was certain Julia would have been made acquainted by some method, that, however inconsistent it might seem with your deportment, your heart was still hers. Had that been the case, I should have applauded your conduct last night; but, if she does love you, it must have been terrible to her amiable soul to have been a stranger to the true situation of yours, and have seen you lavish those *douceurs* on another you once assured her she only was entitled to from you.—However, suffer me *once more*, Osmond, to *advise*—it is thus: if you think you can attach yourself without *much violence* to Lady Maria Harley, pursue her:—she is handsome, well descended, accomplished; her fortune is three times superior to Julia’s; and, as you are resolved against the match your father proposes, her alliance will (in proportion to her money) be more agreeable to the Duke than my sister’s.”

“ You are not generous, Lord Mortimer, thus to insult an unhappy man!—Good heaven! what unaccountable prejudices!—Could a little ridiculous levity with a silly girl, in which not a mention of love was made, cause you to judge so unworthily of the stability of my passion for Lady Julia?—But I understand you, my Lord;—you are but too ready to join the Pemberton’s in desiring Suffolk’s connection!—to his more powerful address you wish to sacrifice me.”

“ I am injured, Osmond, by the suspicion. I know your excellence; and, if you still love Julia as ardently as ever, I would sooner see her yours than married to an Emperor.—Depend upon my friendship; and, as a proof of it, I will this evening contrive a method that you shall speak to her in private; and I will so warmly be your advocate, and set matters on a right foot, that I dare pronounce you will go to rest with a lighter heart than you now are master of.”

Here the subject ended.—We took a long ride to visit a little family which the Mortimer’s raised from poverty and distress to competency and happiness. It consists of father, mother, and three daughters. The father was out on his farming-business; the mother was shelling pease, in which she was (in an odd sort of a way) *assisted* by the youngest girl; a sweet little monkey, four years old, who was more studious to scatter the work of her hands on the floor, than to accumulate the store her good mother was providing. The little urchin’s caresses, after the first half hour, delighted me so much, that I could scarcely leave her behind me.

The eldest daughter was working some beautiful embroidery for Lady Mortimer, who was at the pains of instructing her herself in an employment which will ensure her independency when she has the misfortune of losing her parents:—when finished, it is to be purchased by her Ladyship with a valuable gratuity. The second sister was exercising her needle on household linen. Every thing in and about the house seemed admirably clean, and rustically elegant.

I cannot paint to you the grateful joy that glowed on each feature at the sight of their benefactor, who,

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on his part, treated them with that respectful affability which should ever be the tribute from us to the very lowest virtuous female. There was also a paternal tenderness blended in his manner, that proved he was interested in their happiness.

We got some breakfast prepared in an instant, and after remaining a couple of hours at Welby-Farm, were about to return, when Jenny (the little cherub I have mentioned) caught hold of my hand, and desired I would not go till she had brought me some roses. She soon came back loaden with the fragrant burthen: the most beautiful among them were inferior to the blooming tints of her cheeks. I pressed her in my arms, and asked her to go home with me. "That I will!" she replied, turning up her pretty mouth to give me a kiss. But my invitation cost poor Jenny much uneasiness; for, when her mother interfered, and she found she could not accompany me, she cried and sobbed so piteously, that I was quite distressed: however, I at last pacified her, by leaving with her a trinket from my watch; and promising to see her very soon.—I am determined to take the charge of this child upon myself: I will have her well educated, and fix her in the world to advantage at a proper age. What pleasure shall I know in drawing from obscurity a beautiful flower, which else

"Would waste its sweetness in the desert air;"

and, by transplanting it to a more cultivated soil, render it an honour to society. Mr. and Mrs. Perrot are descended from good families; but a series of misfortunes reduced them to the lowest ebb of affliction, which they must have sunk under, but for the godlike humanity of Mortimer, who extricated them from ruin, and has placed them by their own choice in the station they now are. Their story is melancholy, and I have not time to give it—'tis near four o'clock, and I am but half dressed.—Ah, this evening! Montague;—what will it produce?—But away with despondency!—

"My

"My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne,
And an unaccustom'd spirit lifts me above
The ground with chearful thoughts."——

* * * * *

Seven o'Clock.

I saw Lady Julia a few minutes before we assembled at dinner. She looked more an angel, if possible, than usual: her eyes beamed with a bewitching softness; her cheeks were animated with a vermillion that glowed uncommonly resplendent, and set off the snowy whiteness of her skin;—her teeth,—her lips,—pearls and coral wore their resemblance. She was robed in white lutestring. Such genuine beauty, grace, and elegance, never were so perfectly blended in any object as in her!—I gazed with rapture on her; and could have done so for hours, if her conscious eye had not met mine, and her lovely blushes chid my too eager admiration.——She seemed a mountain nymph, encircled with the cestus of a Venus.

The Ladies demanded of me, *where I had spent the morning?* Mortimer, without allowing me time, answered, "Part of it at Mr. Perrot's." His Lady, in a gay manner, reproached him for carrying me thither; and bid me *not think of flirting with her favourite Kitty, who was too good a girl to be made unhappy*: adding, "I know so accomplished a cavalier as you are, can easily make an impression on an artless girl of fourteen."

"I am ignorant," returned Mortimer, "what effect his visit had on Kitty; but, I am sure, in the course of our absence, he gave not a few pangs to the heart of a very pretty female, from whom he received the utmost encouragement that man could desire.—Osmond, keep your own secret, I insist. *Mum's the word; I never blab.*" They were very anxious to know the person; and, receiving no satisfaction from their host, turned to me, and overwhelmed me with a volubility of questions. "I will never forgive you, Osmond, if you tell," cried the perplexing peer. To humour him,

him, and to give a little more subject for female curiosity to work upon, I rallied the pretty creatures, and evaded answering to the purpose. Dacre enquired whether *Lady Maria Harley lived between this and Welby-Farm?* "She does," replied Mortimer, with a sagacious look at me, which comprehended much meaning. "Then, Ladies, you need interrogate no further!" exclaimed Pemberton. "I pity Lady Henrietta Marchmont extremely!" said Miss Charlotte Pelham. After a few sarcastic smiles, and as many *witticisms*, (which, as they were directed to me, I could have spared,) they dropped the topic. However, I shall at supper explain the riddle; and, to save Lady Maria from any ill-natured censures, put an end to Mortimer's secret, and inform them it was no other than my little Jenny who obliged me with such distinguished marks of favour. I must observe that Lady Julia seemed not at all desirous to know who the object was: she uttered not a word, and was wholly engaged in contemplating a miniature on her arm. Did I not know it to be her mother's, I should have been devilishly uneasy.

I am waiting for a signal from Mortimer: he is to observe Lady Julia, and, the first moment he sees her alone, accompany me to her presence. May he find such a propitious one!

I am uneasy at some marks of preference I have been honoured with from a Lady here, who, as she is every way deserving, merits a better fate than to bestow her affections on a man who cannot return them——Ha! —the signal is given!——More of this subject another time—I go,—and may success attend me!——Be still, thou throbbing heart!——

* * * * *

Twelve o'Clock.

Attend, Montague, whilst I impart to you the result of Lord Mortimer's last office of friendship. On joining him, I learned that Lady Julia, a quarter of

an hour before, had left the company, and walked quite alone towards the wilderness. With eager steps we pursued her *route*; but found our haste impeded by a small gate over a canal, which was locked and deprived of its key; she, sweet soul! no doubt, resting assured that she had secured herself from molestation.—Who would not wade thro' the Hellespont, though the fate of Leander swam before his eyes, to gain the sight of a fairer mistress than ever his Hero was?—However, we had no occasion to risk a similar catastrophe, since leaping could conquer the barrier to our access. The *feat* was instantly performed;—and an hundred yards brought us to an alcove where Lady Julia was seated. Her elbows rested on a small ornamental table;—her hands, which supported her head, were clasped over her eyes; so that she saw us not, till the very near approach of steps disturbed her from her position.—She looked up—suddenly started on beholding us at her side, and was precipitately retiring, when Mortimer caught her by the hand.

“No, Julia!—though you may fly with impunity from my companion, you must not from your brother. Here I detain you prisoner; nor shall you escape till we have some conversation with you.”

“Ah, my Lord!—is this well done of you—thus to steal on my privacy?”

“Pardon, Madam, my temerity!” cried I, casting myself at her feet: “the despair you have thrown me into has caused it.—I come, dear Lady Julia, to express my love—my adoration of you once more,—and, if you still continue so inflexibly cruel,—to remove for ever from your sight, after this final interview, an *obnoxious* lover.—Your treatment is almost a conviction that you hold me deserving of the appellation. Ah! think what the idea costs me!”—She appeared exceedingly embarrassed,—frequently panted for respiration;—her colour went and came;—she could only articulate,

“Rise, my Lord!—do not—pray do not kneel—I beg you.”

“I cannot rise, Madam, till I obtain an acknowledgment of pity for what you have made me endure since

since I first dared to inform you of my unalterable passion—till I——“Stop,” said Mortimer, “and allow me to speak.”—“Not a word, my Lord, unless Lord Osmond quits his posture.”—I obeyed her,—bowed,—and threw myself against a statue for support, almost as lifeless with fear and expectation as the stone on which I leaned.

“You were in an error, my dear sister,” protested Mortimer, “concerning my friend, when he declared his affection for you:—you thought him engaged to Lady Henrietta, and dishonourable in addressing another. Since you left London, you have been undeceived, and are positively *assured* he was at liberty to offer you those vows which you believed wounded your delicacy to listen to. Now that the *enigma* is ended, attend once more to a repetition of them. If your heart knows no prior attachment, let me become an advocate for Osmond.—Imagine not that I mean he should owe your favour to my solicitations! Far from it: my intention is only to prove to you, that he must be deserving of it, when I pretend to interest myself in his suit, and answer for the fervency and constancy of his love.—If you admit to a place in your heart a man whose worth equals yours, your mother and Pember-ton will gladly make you both happy by consenting to his proposals; and Caroline and I shall rejoice in seeing you united. I am satisfied my Julia will rise superior to female artifice, and will deal openly and without reserve to a man of honour, who must the more adore her for her candour.”

I resumed my place at her feet,—grasped her cold passive hand,—*implored her compassion,—and, if her heart was free, that she would bestow it on one whose existence depended on the possession of such a treasure.*

“You are too kind, my Lord,” replied the dear girl, “in this flattering protestation of regard for me;—but suffer me to say, I cannot think you *quite* so sincere as my brother does.—Why should I consent to your solicitations? Your father wishes you connected to another. It would be culpable in me to encourage your addresses, when they are in opposition to his desires,

desires—indeed, my Lord, you are wrong to ask it of me.”

I represented my father's unreasonable command in the most touching manner;—his little affection toward me. I regretted, for her sake, that my fortune, independent of him, was so inconsiderable; and honestly confessed, that I built on no expectations from the Duke, unless I married the Lady he chose. “Yet,” added I, “as he plainly testifies no view to my felicity in the horrible union he wants to force me into, I hold myself free, by the law of Nature, to seek for it in a connection with the only woman upon earth I will ever marry.—Be assured, Madam, I should think no mortal under heaven so happy as the one before you, could I, at the expense of all the Duke's wealth, call you mine.—If I can be so blessed as to gain your affections—ah, Lady Julia!—a very little will satisfy us; and what is wanting of the superfluities of life, will be more than compensated for by the fervency of love.

—Yet, Madam, I am ungenerous in this proposal!—too self-interested perhaps!—Why should I attempt to be the invader of your heart, when a more distinguished rival, on whom beauty and sense have been lavish,—who offers you a princely fortune,—has the power of rendering you more completely happy?—Forgive me, Lady Julia,—Suffolk—Ah, great God!—I cannot bear it—No! excellent as he is,—he must not rob me of my dearest hopes.—You are silent—speak I conjure you—and let me know my fate.”

“Did I not say, my Lord,” returned she, “that I suspected the sincerity of your professions?—I will be candid. I believe something of this very subject was hinted to a particular object last night;—and, by what I can judge, was repeated this morning.”

“Good Heaven! what do you mean, dear Lady Julia?”

“Lady Maria,” cried she “would never have bestowed *so much encouragement* on one of your sex, if she had not a foundation in your behaviour for it.”

Mortimer immediately understood that she alluded to what he had mentioned at dinner. In a few words he cleared up the matter; and informed her of the restrictions

frictions he had laid me under in regard of my conduct towards her on the night of my arrival. He insinuated that my attention to my partner was an artifice of his directing, for which he had many good reasons to offer, if the time permitted; but as it did not, begged she would be satisfied in knowing that she should one day be informed and approve of them.

"And now, Lady Julia," cried I, "favour me with your sentiments?—am I to be the happiest,—or most miserable of men?—Like a trembling culprit—I wait the awful decision of my lovely arbitress."

"Thus then I answer," replied she:—"I am above disguise,—and will freely own,—that the Duke of Suffolk's title, fortune, and accomplishments, make no other impression on me than of disgust;—and that, if my mother and Pemberton consent,—I shall prefer even poverty with you to affluence and grandeur with another."

I was so agitated with transport, that speech was denied me for a few minutes;—I could only rest my head on the snowy hand I held.

"Julia," said Mortimer, "how noble is this!—Thou art dearer to me, my admirable sister, than ever!—What, Osmond,—quite dumb!"

"Oh!" exclaimed I, "I am blessed beyond the power of utterance!—Ever-dearest—most generous of women!—be still kinder, and fancy those acknowledgments so due are paid you in my heart, which, overcharged with gratitude—with joy,—cannot render me eloquent."

"And now, my Lord,—I beg you will leave me," cried the angel.

"Not yet, my Julia!" replied I; "do not command it—My senses are confused; and I can hardly credit the reality of what has passed.—Once more strike my ravished ear with the melody of that voice;—once more repeat you are not indifferent to your Osmond!"

"How can I more plainly convince you of it than I do?—No, my Lord,—indeed I am not—And now leave me."

"Not till you have ratified this assurance," returned Mortimer, "of which I have been a witness, by granting

granting an embrace. I insist on it, else I shall not think it binding." I stretched forth my arms, and pressed to my bosom the blushing, reluctant fair-one—from her lips I obtained a kiss.—Oh, such a moment!—Montague, even you must have envied me.

Mortimer and I retired.—I poured out my thanks to him for being the chief instrument of my felicity; and easily discovered that his friendly soul sympathized in my joy, though he refused the sentiments of gratitude I expressed.

I whispered Lady Mortimer *that I was the happiest of my sex.*

"I dare say my officious Lord has been accessory to it!" cried she.

"He has indeed!" I answered. "To him am I indebted for more than life."

"And I will assuredly chide him for it," replied her sprightly Ladyship. "By giving you *more than life*, he has deprived me of *more than mirth*. I was in expectation of seeing many humorous *freaks* from the nonsensical perplexities of two lovers, who feared to declare their passion for each other, and were endeavouring to hide it, when they both wanted to disclose it.—Indeed, my Lord, you have behaved like a very *sensible* nobleman!"—Lady Julia was rather grave all the evening; yet I am a bad physiognomist, if she was not happy. My extacy I could hardly restrain; but I apprehended adding to her sweet confusion, by paying her more than common attention,—therefore avoided it.

I am now going to bed,—not to sleep;—for joy will as effectually banish it from my eyes, as a contrary emotion has done for many nights back.—Can it be possible, my dear Charles, that, after all my anxiety, torture, and despair, I should be so amply rewarded?—Am I in my senses, and find it a truth that I am the elected of Lady Julia's choice?—Both are facts.—*She would prefer poverty with me, to affluence and grandeur with another!*—Those were the enchanting words.—I had her covered with blushes in my arms—I kissed her—That seal of constancy was mutually given.—Delightful reflections!—Under the canopy of
heaven

heaven there exists not at this moment so blessed a mortal as your Henry.

* * * * *

Monday, Twelve o'Clock.

I never told you that we act plays here, and have had our first representation very well performed.—I cannot now enter into a circumstantial account of the theatre, scenery, dresses, or players; all of which are far better than you can conceive. Last Thursday it was determined *mia carissima* should next Monday night appear in *Sigismunda*, and I in *Tancred*: this information is analogous to what I am about to speak of presently.

Lady Julia appeared not this morning till most of the company had assembled to breakfast (for the greater number of the party chuse a regular table, in preference to having tea, chocolate, &c. &c. without method in the coffee-room, or their own apartments.) She entered leaning on Miss Edgcumb's arm. Sir Thomas Walpole told her *she looked like the goddess of love*. "My Julia has had pleasant dreams," said Pemberton: "cheerfulness once more plays upon her features." How happy was the object of those dreams!" cried Suffolk.—"Happy indeed!" re echoed several voices.

"I am ignorant what those dreams were," replied Miss Edgcumb; "But I believe Lady Julia liked them not, for she has been up a long time. She came into my apartment;—disturbed me earlier than I approved of;—and has teased me with hearing her repeat the first part of *Sigismunda* so frequently, that I shall be able to speak in no other language all day. I may be apt to exclaim, every now and then, involuntarily,

"Ah, woods! where first my artless bosom learn'd
The sighs of love"——

and, perhaps, again forget myself; and, without knowing a subject for it, run into this eulogium,

"If

"If virtue were to wear a human form,
To light it with her dignity and flame,
Then, soft'ning, mix her smiles and tender graces;
Oh, she would chuse the person of my Tancred!"

"Julia seemed to feel so well what she expressed, that the impression it made on me cannot be forgotten."

The divine girl was confused, and answered Miss Edgcumb, *that she would get another teacher in future to say her lessons to, since she had very little patience, and exposed her folly in so public a manner.* I proposed rehearsing after breakfast;—she blushed, and *declared herself not perfect enough for that yet.*

If (as I have reason to think) our yesterday's *eclaircissement* has effected this alteration in Lady Julia, can any thing be so grateful to my heart?—Sweet angel!—how I adore her!—The youngest Miss Pelham desired to take a ride, as the morning, she said, was pleasant and cool; and bid me propose a party for it, provided I was one of it myself. I consented directly, you may suppose; and told Miss Charlotte that I doubted not but Lady Julia, who was fond of the exercise, would accompany us. "No, no," cried she, "we will not disturb her from her study: her Ladyship is seldom in the humour for bestowing any time on her play, and we'll not be accessory to her neglecting of it."—Lady Julia smiled, and, with a little meaning I am sure, replied, "Do not be afraid;—I shall not go. Since one memorable day, that, but for Lord Osmond, I should have been killed by a fall from my horse, my courage has entirely forsaken me; and it will be one while ere I can prevail on myself to ride again."—"Well, I will supply your place, Julia," cried Miss Edgcumb; but, as I am very timorous, and Lord Osmond very expert at freeing *distressed damsels* from perilous disasters, I put myself under his protection.—My Lord, you will be my beau?" I bowed and promised to be more watchful of her, than the Hesperian dragon of the golden fruit.—The Ladies retired to equip themselves; and I to scratch a few lines.

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* * * * *

Two o'Clock, Tuesday Morning.

I have had no opportunity of speaking to Lady Julia, but in the presence of a third person.—I did hope to have taken my seat behind her at the play we saw enacted a few hours ago; but, whilst I was assisting Lady Caroline Denley into the first row of the box (who has the misfortune to be a little lame from a sprained ankle,—an event that happened some years back), Seymour anticipated me, and took the place I had designed for myself when I handed in Lady Julia.—You can guess at my disappointment. I had looked on it as certain that I should have engaged Lady Julia's attention during a good part of the performance; but the fellow crossed me like my evil genius. I endeavoured by a look to convince her of my mortification;—she was cruel enough to laugh at it. The seat I had been robbed of was well worth any effort I could make to regain it—I went behind the scenes, and found Sir James.

"Westbrook, it would be humorous enough," cried I, "to inveigle Seymour from the situation where he has so adroitly fixed herself; in which he is exulting most unmercifully over his brethren who wish to approach the *Nonpareil* he adores." "I took notice," replied he, "that he was grinning with pleasure like a monkey, and bowing twenty times in a minute to Lady Julia, when I cast a glance into the box—but - a---prithce, my Lord, why not let the poor devil be gratified? It is so seldom that he is—though, perhaps—a—I beg pardon,—Lord Osmond thinks he could with more ardour breathe impassioned sounds into the ear of the beautiful Julia,—"*you'll excuse me*"—or probably your Lordship has a *billet-doux*—or—a copy of verses to deliver *secretly*!—Ah, she is a sad perverse girl—she sometimes refuses to read,—or even to accept of either; as *you* and *I* can testify from ocular demonstration, you know, my Lord.

—"A truce

—"A truce with your rally, my good Westbrook, and get Seymour away."

"Let me see,—how can it be done?—Do you go back,—I will make out something to say, and send for him."

In a few minutes after I entered the box, one of the attendants appeared, and said, *he came with an entreaty from Sir James, that Lord Seymour would allow him to speak with his Lordship for five moments.* His reply was, "Do my *baise-mains* to his Honour, and tell him—I value my place too highly to quit it, was even his happiness dependent on seeing me just now; and I know him sufficiently to suspect, that he means no more than to make me relinquish it."—The servant retired;—he turned to me, "Have I not answered him well, Osmond?"

* * * * *

One o'Clock.

I am just come from rehearsing with Lady Julia:—on my soul, Montague, she is more than mortal!—In every feature,—in every moment,—in every word,—there is a something celestial breaks forth, which no daughter of Eve ever before possessed. "The mere rhapsody of an infatuated lover!" you cry. —If so, every spectator this morning was an *infatuated lover*; for their sentiments tended to the same point, though expressed differently.——I must for the hundredth time repeat,—What a form is hers!—What graces play about her!—What a sweetness of voice!—Yet with me these are secondary objects:—her soul is spotless as the new-fallen snow;—her temper milder than the vernal breeze;—her heart a faithful representative of the great benevolent Being's who created her,—merciful to all that stand in need of it,—yet firm as adamant where firmness is a virtue.——I was struck at the first sight with her beauty, and sighed to possess it;—but an intimate acquaintance with this loveliest work of heaven, has rendered me, not more indifferent

to

to her external perfection, but so much captivated with those excellencies of the mind which she owns, that, were she even to lose the first, and become as plain as she is now charming, I would still pant with desire unspeakable to call her mine.

Lady Caroline Denley has imparted to me a tale concerning this admirable girl, which I will give you.

Lady Pemberton carried abroad with her the daughter of a poor tenant of my Lord's in Hampshire, who had a numerous family. She took great pains with the girl, which she thought well rewarded; for, to all appearance, Fanny had imbibed very fully those lessons of rectitude and piety that her good Lady had given both by precept and example. On their return to England, the family went down to Pemberton's seat near Southampton, where, in six weeks after, Lady Pemberton discovered that this girl had an intrigue with the steward, who was a married man, and who had till then preserved a fair character. The vile wretch was immediately discharged from his employ, and Fanny sent home to her parents, with an account of the criminality of her conduct, and a desire *that she might never more presume to approach persons whose kindness to her she had recompensed so ill.*—Her Ladyship's displeasure extended to the whole family.—*There you and I must think her very blameable; but there are many that would find it easy to excuse the effect of such a shock on one, whose affection for the girl was great, and who felt keenly the disappointment of beholding her in her true colour, the reverse of what she thought her.*—When Lady Pemberton's wrath seemed a little appeased, Lady Julia interceded with her mother, not to abandon a miserable family, rendered yet more wretched by this worst of all calamities. She commanded her to be silent on the subject; and, *as an example to her other dependents, declared she would never bestow the least notice on Fanny or her connections.*

Lady Julia went privately to the farmer's, and found the girl an object of real compassion. She remonstrated with her in a soothing manner;—exhorted her to repentance;—and convinced her of the atrociousness of her fault, which, with tears of remorse, on her knees,

knees, the poor creature abjured for ever. Lady Julia imparted her mother's determination to them as gently as possible. She recommended to the old people to remove from a place, where unluckily the melancholy tale had become too public; and advised their going into Lincolnshire, where Lord Mortimer has a noble estate, whom she promised to prevail on to write to his steward to let the farmer become one of his Lordship's tenants, at as easy a rate as would be necessary for his limited circumstances. She gave them fifty guineas, to enable them to undertake with courage their long journey, and to settle themselves with comfort in a new habitation. She bid them not to despond, or treat with harshness the unhappy Fanny, whose feelings amply revenged on herself her unfortunate transgression. She promised to supply them half-yearly with the same sum out of her own private allowance, till Lady Pemberton should be assured, by the exemplary life Fanny would in future lead, that her soul was become as alienated from vice as it had been from innocence.—They were profuse in blessings on their lovely young benefactress:—Fanny fell at her feet;—with inarticulate words *implored of heaven, to let her never stand in need of any part of that comfort she so sweetly administered to an almost broken heart!—She begged that it would also reward adequately her charming Lady's unparalleled goodness!—*She sunk on the ground, —and fainted.

The parents, who had till this fatal misdemeanor tenderly loved their daughter, feared they would never bring her back to life. Lady Julia assisted to recover her, and left them not, till she had made the father and mother vow, that no reproach, no unkind look, should ever be thrown on Fanny;—till she had seen her cordially embraced by both;—and a melancholy composure take place, on the countenance of the latter, of that horror and despair which marked her features at her entrance.

Lady Julia entreated Lord Mortimer, who came down the day after, to write into Lincolnshire, that a very honest old man (whose family was large) wished to become his tenant; and begged him to give orders that

that his steward would befriend him as much as possible. Mortimer was happy to oblige her, and did as she desired immediately. The farmer, his wife, and children, arrived in Lincolnshire, where they found the steward ready to do them every good office. They procured a tenement suitable to their circumstances; and lived with convenience, in a most edifying manner, on Lady Julia's generous donations. By industry the old man acquired an equivalent sum to her first six months payment, and very shortly he trebled his income. When his young patroness went down, on her sister's marriage, to Mortimer-Hall, she contrived to see the family, and express her approbation at their conduct. The farmer told her *that their story was quite unknown in the neighbourhood;—that they were respected by all,—and to her were indebted for the happiness they enjoyed.* He also informed her, *that a young man, of an excellent character, had taken a liking to Fanny, and asked his consent to marry her.* “And what did you say to him, my good friend?” cried Lady Julia. “Why, my Lady, I evaded giving my consent; for I think my poor girl ought to live single. I therefore answered, *that I did not know whether my daughter would chuse to marry, since she was well convinced how little her mother and myself, with such a charge of children, could spare her services.* He immediately applied to Fanny: her reply was, *she could not leave her parents in their narrow situation; and, as she was a help to them, was resolved never to gain new connections, but to spend her life in rendering them every tender office in her power.* She thanked the farmer for his good-will towards her, but begged him to seek some woman worthier of him than she was, and to be satisfied with her determination.”—“And was he satisfied with it?” “Oh no, my Lady!—he was very miserable; nay, he is just as much so now;—he still continues to follow Fanny;—and troth, it grieves my heart to hear him fetch such deep sighs, and see him look so wretched.” Lady Julia applauded the delicacy of their notions; and asked the girl, *if she liked the farmer?* “Ah, my Lady!” returned she, “I will not deny, that—if I were still innocent

—I would be very happy in chusing such a husband." Lady Julia told her, if she had an affection for him, and he was so much attached to her, she thought her best way would be to summon up courage, and tell her story plainly and honestly to the young man, and then let him judge whether he could be satisfied to receive her hand so circumstanced as she was. She bid Fanny to consider well first, how critical such a proceeding would be. If he was a man of honour, though he declined marrying her, he would hold himself bound to keep the confidence she reposed in him inviolable; but whether he was so, was the point. And next she must weigh well in her own breast, whether she loved him sufficiently to expose such a secret to his knowledge.—She recommended to her, repeatedly, to deliberate on the matter very thoroughly before she took any step; and to reflect, also, if he should be hurried away by his passion, and after such a deposit take her for his wife, whether she could bear, in any ill-tempered mood, to be reproached by him for the very fault she had so ingenuously confessed before the ceremony:—a circumstance that probably would not happen; yet, in her opinion, she must look on the dark side in so important a conflict, and judge if her nature could endure the worst that might befall her.—But, at any rate, she told Fanny, she must not entertain an idea of deceiving the farmer by marrying him without first relating the whole affair to him, be the consequence what it might.

The girl, after consulting her heart, resolved to divulge the secret to her lover.—He admired her principles, and liked her the more for her candour.—No objections remained;—they married,—and Lady Julia presented them with a hundred pounds, and promised, by debarring herself of some trifling expenses, to send them as much more at the end of the winter. She was as good as her word. Lady Caroline Denley went into Lincolnshire early in the spring, for a fortnight or three weeks; and Fanny received the sum from the hands of Lady Caroline's woman, who was enjoined
secrecy.

secrecy by the generous donor in delivering it, but was ignorant of the cause.

Fanny was agitated at this fresh proof of her amiable young Lady's remembrance;—and, as Mrs. Payne was about to depart, she took her hand, and *begged to be heard, whilst she repeated a little history which would demonstrate that the soul of Lady Julia was as beautiful as her person.* The good domestic listened with attention, whilst she repeated the preceding narrative, and joined her tears of admiration to Fanny's at such uncommon humanity.—Mrs. Payne begged to be allowed to reveal what she had uttered to her Lady. “By all means!” she answered. “Add, also, if you please, Madam, that Fanny and her husband are as happy a couple as ever were united; and implore Lady Caroline to join your and my prayers to the Almighty, that he may bless, here and hereafter, the most virtuous,—the most gentle,—the most compassionate of her sex!—for such is Lady Julia Herbert.”

Well, Charles! is not this a corroborating proof that I am not mistaken in the mind of my fair mistress?—But I leave you to draw your own comments on the above recital, satisfied that they must be very much in her favour.

I gave you a hint of my being so unfortunate, I will call it, as to be distinguished highly by a female guest of my Lord Mortimer's. You will excuse my divulging her name;—nor must your creative imagination endeavour to supply one; for you would undoubtedly be wrong, as the Lady is unknown to you:—you never even heard of her, I am sure. She contrived, some hours ago, to put a billet into my hand, unseen by any creature, which I here transcribe.

“Can the sensible heart of the *gallant* Lord Osmond be ignorant of the impression he has made on the soul of——. Ah, my Lord! violent indeed must be that love, which causes me thus to overstep the bounds of modesty, and leave myself at your mercy!—But you are a man of nice honour—Fame loudly speaks it—and are superior, I am convinced, to the meanness of triumphing over misery which you have occasioned.

—Yes, my Lord, I love.—Lady Henrietta Marchmont—ah, how that name grates my ear!—will she be your wife, my Lord?—Forbid it, heaven!—Your heart cannot incline to her—but a father's harsh command may be equally fatal to my hopes.—I am in despair—Keep me not in suspense, my Lord;—and oh!—if you have the least humanity in your nature,—let me not see you particular in your attention this day to Maria Harley.”

Flattered as I must be by this unmerited partiality, I had been more delighted, had she made me the *confident* of her passion for one of my *free* companions.—With what pleasure would I have served her!—As it is, I am sadly embarrassed!—a painful task indeed, to tell one of the lovely sex that her affections are bestowed on a man who cannot return them!—My compassion is greatly excited for the fair object to whom I am so much obliged; but my honour is concerned to put her out of doubt. I will take an opportunity of informing her, that I am under an engagement that binds me as firmly to another, as if the nuptial tie had passed between us:—I will not say to whom; but leave her to imagine that Lady Henrietta is the person. Things are not ripe yet for a disclosure; and I would as soon trust a bird with a cat, as this jealous woman with the knowledge of my loving in secret Lady Julia. ---Writing must prevent much confusion, and save a multitude of questions, not so convenient to be answered at present!—To it then!

* * * * *

I have written, and will wait a favourable moment to present my letter. I have an awkward affair to go through, faith! and, I will answer for it, you are enjoying a hearty laugh at my perplexed situation.---Ha, Souville!---I am late, do you say?---Indeed so I am!---I must dress directly.--We are all to dine at Lady Maria Harley's; and, forgetting the distance of Boughton-Grange, or that such a place was on the globe, should have continued writing much longer,
but

but for his necessary interruption. That you may not be ignorant of my happiness, I will seal my packet, and dispatch it directly.

Adieu, dear Montague!---If this finds you at Somerville-House, tell your Louisa in your own method, that I admire her much.

Surely I shall catch one lucky moment this day to renew the subject nearest my heart, to my much-loved Julia!---Since last Sunday I have been through compulsion silent on it.—Adieu again!

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Windsor.

BUT little should I deserve the friendship of my Louisa, did I longer defer acquainting her, that my Lord Osmond, last Sunday evening, accompanied by Lord Mortimer, stole upon me very unexpectedly, and cleared up all past inconsistencies so well, that I consented to look upon him as a lover.—Ah, Louisa, could you have seen him at the time—with what ardour—tenderness—and submission—he pleaded his passion—could you have seen the despair and love his eyes expressed—and the conflicting emotions that overpowered his whole form—you must have been absorbed in compassion—in admiration!—Yes, my friend, Lord Osmond is the *accepted* lover of your Julia.—I know no happiness equal to what that thought affords me; for it proves, I must be convinced that his soul is worthy of its habitation, or, alluring as the latter is,—and charmed as I confess I am with it,—I would not be the wife of Osmond on any account. Louisa, I boast not of more heroism than I could have exerted:—nay, my past refusal of him (though I loved him beyond conception), when I supposed he acted unworthily, verifies the assertion.—I write in a hurry, as I promised to be a performer presently in the concert-room.

We are just returned from Boughton-Grange, where we passed a most agreeable day. Lady Maria was lively and pleasing;—but I observed that Lord Osmond took less notice of her than usual—I was sorry for it, fearing he thought my temper jealous, and that I should be hurt at his gallantry towards her. Charlotte Pelham watched every movement of his eyes—they seemed to avoid hers: however, once at dinner they met, and a deep blush overspread his cheeks. I looked at her, and perceived the same suffusion on hers.—Poor girl! I hope, for her own sake, she will not forget the delicacy of her sex, and lower herself by any advances in the Marquis's opinion.—I fear nothing on his side;—he is all truth, generosity, and fidelity.

Whilst we were in the garden after tea, Lady Mortimer, Lord Osmond, and myself, made a trio, and separated from the rest, who were all forming parties of a similar sort. We turned, by Caroline's desire, into a large kind of labyrinth that she admired much. He took my hand, and kissed it. "Shall I reproach my Julia," cried he, "for having with design avoided me these two days?—Indeed, it was cruel!—I had so little time allowed me last Sunday to express my love—my happiness—my thanks—that I have looked with impatience for each coming minute, hoping it would prove more fortunate than the past; but how great my disappointment, when it arrived and brought with it new obstructions to the felicity I sighed for!—Have you not purposely contrived it?—Pray tell me!" "No, my Lord." "Amiable Lady Julia! how soothing to my heart is that answer! Your kind condescension, Madam, is bestowed on a man who would hold you dearer to his soul—who would respect you in a superior degree for it,—were it possible;—but my passion cannot encrease—it is arrived at the utmost height—and a purer, or more lasting one, never filled the breast of mortal!"

"*Never filled the breast of mortal,*" repeated Caroline; "that is saying a great deal! Why now, was not Petrarch's passion something beyond yours, think you, my Lord?"

"By

"By all that is sacred, no!" returned he. "Petrarch worded the description of his in a manner that I dare not hope even to imitate; but his Laura was not more adored than Osmond's Julia. — So far I will allow we differ:—he expressed content at seeing the woman he felt so much for, the wife of another; and his writings give us to understand, that he wished for no other happiness than what he possessed in beholding—in hearing—in being near her. I cannot refine so far upon the passion—I would not live to see this hand (and he again pressed it to his lips) the property of any man but the one who is now thus blessed; and swear to you the ultimity of my wishes is to receive it with my sweet mistress's vow of mutual attachment at the altar."

"Julia, why do you not speak?" cried she. "Lord, how oddly you take your *swain's* protestations?—Psha!—blushing so foolishly!—Thank him in nice-chosen expressions—A long, well-turned period of acknowledgment will be more acceptable to him than those"—Lord Osmond interrupted her, and declared she was inhuman.

"I beg you will be quiet," answered Caroline. "You have made me as subservient to your present purpose, as the monkey did the cat; and shall I not reward myself for the disagreeable situation I am in?—Come, Julia, I wait your answer with great impatience. It must be an admirable one after studying it so long!—My Lord Osmond cannot blush, I believe; or I would endeavour to add as much *rouge* to his natural complexion, as I have done to yours.—Ah, Heaven be praised! here comes Westbrook; and he shall relieve me from the embarrassment of being spectator to a love-scene."

Sir James drew near—I was rejoiced at it; for my sister's raillery served but to render me more awkward. "Lady Mortimer," said he, "come this way with me:—I have a curious anecdote to tell you, which I have this moment made myself master of—Oh such a discovery!"—"Let me hear it also, I beg!" exclaimed I. "You must pardon me, Lady Julia," replied he:

"your curiosity is absolutely intolerable!—God help the poor man whose luck it may be to call himself your husband. The deuce a secret must he expect to keep from your knowledge!—Could you believe, my Lord, that one night, at a ball, she was very near drawing half a score of us into a quarrel with her brother, by seeking to know a jest not so proper for a female ear to listen to?—and the artful way she chose to be informed of it, was to pretend to vindicate Lady Henrietta Mar"——

"Who, Sir?" demanded Osmond with feigned impatience.—The other assumed an affected terror——

"Lady Henrietta Mar---garitta---Wilhelmina—Carolina—a—I really forget her other names, my Lord—Poor Julia often complains that her memory is bad—she forgets them too, no doubt!—don't you, my amiable cousin?" making me signs at the time not to speak.

Sir James, my dear Louisa, is certainly no stranger to Lord Osmond's inclinations. He led my sister some yards before us, and gave him an opportunity of renewing the topic he seemed anxious to be upon, without any constraint. I was less confused after Caroline left me; but do not you suppose that I was too unserved in my answers to the Marquis, from having no witness to what I uttered. Our walk was continued for near an hour, in which space we consulted on the best method of imparting to Lady Pemberton and the Duke of Westmorland (for that I insisted on) the situation of our hearts: but we came to no absolute determination how the task should be performed. As the time I mentioned expired, we heard voices approaching us. Sir James and Caroline stopped; and when Sophia, Charlotte Pelham, the Duke of Suffolk, and several others, were in sight, my sister had hold of my arm, Westbrook was at my side, and Lord Osmond at hers: so there can be no doubt but that Sir James is in the secret. I am glad of it: he is sensible—has much affection for me I am sure; and his conduct proves that he thinks Lord Osmond capable of making

me happy. He said not a word to me of the Marquis—he has really delicacy; and, what is uncommon in so lively a genius, can deprive himself of a laugh to avoid giving pain to another. Did he not think me attached to the amiable Henry, he would have been very teasing about the *clandestine* appearance things wore.—And now I must obey the summons that Mour-nies brings me.—Adieu, my excellent friend!

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor, Friday.

I HAVE never pretended to give you an exact journal of the pastimes that each day produces here. I write of those circumstances only which immediately happen during the course of my letter; and, that you may know in some measure how we go on, keep it open for three or four days. This was the method I think I observed in my last, and mean to continue it whilst my correspondence exists from hence. How long that may be is uncertain; for my Dulcinea speaks of hurrying me to town to ask my father's consent to address her:—a consent I shall never obtain.—No matter; she must be mine without it.—If I was not lazy, I should present you with a full account of a *fête champêtre* we had last Wednesday. I will only tell you that it was in character with the elegance, the superabundance of Mortimer's taste; that the weather was delightful; the dresses mostly well chosen; the company wonderfully pleased:—that, by his and my agreement, Westbrook danced with Lady Julia,—I with Miss Edgcomb—and the consequences answered the wishes of both—he frequently engaged my partner in conversation—I was not backward in assiduity to his;—so that, in fact, without having the appearance of particularity, I was just as happy as if *mia bella Julia* had engaged to give me her hand for the night. The

partie quarée was never asunder—What a delicious evening!—I shall ever remember it with delight.

I have discovered the state of my heart to Westbrook: my confidence gave him pleasure. He assured me he had long seen my passion, and hoped no obstacle would prevent my union with his charming cousin.

“Allow me to tell you, Lord Osmond,” cried he, “that in Julia Herbert you will possess a treasure more valuable than I can find words to express it—you, and you alone,” he flatteringly said “deserve her. And now I shall be as sincere with you. For years—nay, before I well knew the meaning of the word—I loved the angelic girl—she was dear to me as the vital blood that warmed my heart; and the idea of losing her was torture. I saw plainly she beheld me only with esteem—cold esteem! I did not dare to tell her of my sufferings---I was even afraid to betray them to her---but under an assumed gaiety concealed the anguish of my soul. I attended my aunt to England, and revived with Colonel Elliot the intimacy that had subsisted between us at Rome. Almeria remained in Paris—he knew her not—and was then no lover. He discovered my attachment, and questioned me about it---I acknowledged the justness of his penetration. He reasoned with me on the absurdity of cherishing a passion for one, whom I averred I had not the remotest expectation of ever being nearer allied to. He frequently repeated his lectures, and admonished me to wean myself from her—to exert my philosophy---and sink the whining, infatuated boy, into the reasonable man.——I left her for three months, and, when I was to behold her after that tedious absence, prepared my heart to meet her as one who in a short while would become the wife of Lenox; for in that space of time she had consented to the persuasions of her brother and uncle, and engaged to give him her hand---Angels fought in her behalf, and saved her from a fellow not worthy of her, and one whom I am satisfied she never loved.—Ah! Osmond, how spiritedly did she behave on his dismissal!——But I digress—After that awful interview my mind became every day easier—

easier—I had almost conquered my weakness (if to love a beautiful, virtuous girl is one), when, to complete the victory, I cultivated an acquaintance with the amiable Miss Edgcumb, who, by engrossing my friendship entirely, obliterated my passion for one object, and made me sensible that I could love another. Pemberton feels not more fraternal affection for Julia than I do—her felicity is dear to me; and I shall think it secured, my Lord, in your arms.”

I begged him to inform me what he imagined would be the sentiments of Lady Pemberton and her son, when they were told that I was the lover of Lady Julia?—He paused—“Speak, my dear Westbrook,” cried I: “they wish for Suffolk’s connection I well know—have I not much to apprehend?”

“We will not be uneasy,” replied he, “by surmising disagreeable events. I never could anticipate misfortunes in my life; nor will I begin on this occasion. But, were I Lord Osmond, I should be in no hurry to give up, or encrease, my present happiness—I should be satisfied for a few weeks, in the society of my mistress, and in knowing that I was beloved by her—I would employ my time in improving her tenderness so far, as to create in it a powerful advocate for me, if things should grow desperate, and I find it expedient to propose to her a precipitate flight northwards. This plan would I pursue: if you have a better, inform me of it; and in whatever respect I can be serviceable to your Lordship, you shall find me at your devotion.”

I expressed my obligation to him—declared he spoke like an oracle, and in a manner quite consonant to my inclinations; but that my following the line he marked out, would depend entirely upon Julia, since, if I saw her distressed at the concealment of my addresses from her mother and my father, I must put an end to it, by immediately avowing my passion to them both.

You may be desirous to hear the result of my letter to the *kind fair one* I mentioned in my last. I had no opportunity of giving it till the evening, when all the company assembled in the garden. I placed myself

at

at her elbow—she dropped behind, knowing my intention; and, as soon as I could take the liberty unperceived, I raised her hand to my lips,—put into it the paper,—and thanked her for the honour she had conferred on a man whose gratitude was adequate to the favour he had received, but whose destiny had prevented him from forming the least idea of profiting of the happiness she generously offered him. I begged her to think me worthy of her friendship, though I was not entitled to her love—to think me sensible of the obligation I owed her—and to think that I suffered inexpressibly at being necessitated to speak in that stile to one, whom, was my heart free, and my hand not engaged, I should deem myself fortunate to call mine. If deceit is ever excusable, dear Montague, it must be in such a case as this.—The Lady I spoke to (though very worthy) could not have been my choice, had I never seen my much loved Julia; yet I thought it incumbent on me to soften a repulse by every method that could possibly be devised. “But that paper, Madam,” added I, “will answer you more fully than I have either courage or ability to do personally—yet, ere I go, let me entreat that I may never again be so much distressed as I have been this day, by hearing further of a subject that makes me very wretched. Fortune, Madam, has provided better for you; and will bestow you on a man, who has it in his power to render you happier than I could do.”—I bowed respectfully to her, and was about to retire—she caught hold of my arm—

“Stop!” cried she, with anger in her eyes, “stop and inform me what right you have to ask any favour of me—you who can be so cruel to a fond-loving, weak girl?—If your letter is to the same purport as what you have spoken,—I desire not to read it.”

“It is, Madam, indeed; but you must retain the packet—it encloses your condescending billet, which in honour I must repossess you of.”

“I want it not—take this shocking packet back again—You will not, my Lord?—Thus then”—and she threw it on the ground—“the first person that
walks

walks this way shall know my folly, and of how cold a texture your heart is composed.—It is a punishment I owe myself for placing my affections on one, who values the advantages Nature has so liberally lavished on him, too highly, to think any mortal worthy of his attention.—And are you mean enough to be satisfied with Henrietta Marchmont—that master piece of deformity!—for a wife, because she has a plentiful quantity of gold?—Osmond, how I despise you!”

“I will not stay to see that pretty mouth again disfigured by such epithets.”—She seized my hand; “You shall not leave me yet—you do well to jest at my unhappiness—it is in character, and only what can be expected from so unfeeling a soul—insensible, low-minded wretch!”—With an intent of alarming her prudence a little, I threw my arms around her in rather a free manner. “Have a care, Madam!” said I, with an earnest countenance: “it is a dangerous sign when ladies in such cases descend to invective—to abusive appellations! Had you not a feeling soul to deal with—were he not a man of honour whose mercy you are at—who scorns to take advantage of your present unguarded condition—you would perceive that it was by no means a lucky one—with some reason you might have cause to load him with aspersions *I merit not*—you would lament when too late the risk you exposed yourself to—But from me,”—and I withdrew my arm,—“you have nothing to fear—I value your peace of mind so highly, as to wish, that you may ever, in a like critical situation, find your companion as insensible as you suppose me to be.—Think justly of my sentiments—promise to receive your own lines—I will take them out, and tear the writing in which they are enclosed to pieces. You shall not read it—you are already acquainted how I am circumstanced. Will you, Madam, oblige me so far as to put yourself out of my power?”

“Would to God I could, my Lord!” and she hid her face in my bosom. “Happy is the woman who possesses those affections you are determined to deny me a share in! She cannot idolize you to the degree that
I do

I do—my passion transports me beyond all bounds; and my indiscretion, which you so cruelly blame, evinces the strength of it. — But you despise an easy conquest—you devote your inclinations to one so governed by selfish principles, as to make your happiness merely a secondary object,—who had sooner render you miserable than incur the smallest censure of mankind by pursuing such steps as I have taken.—Would Maria Harley do as much to prove her attachment?—Ah! I now believe you *can* love!—she is the person, I have no doubt—unkind—inflexible—dear Osmond! — Say, my Lord, can you not endeavour to be grateful to a creature who doats on you more than life? — Your silence answers the question.” She started from me. “Oh, that I may see you held in as much contempt by her whom you prefer—as I am scorned by you? Then will you experience the misery—the heart-rending misery I now endure.—But begone!—you shall not triumph over these unavailing tears, which, in spite of my pride, will fall—Begone! I say, and, ah! that it could be for ever!” She applied her handkerchief to her eyes—I was grieved more than I can express, but obeyed her command, and precipitately left her, well assured, however, that she would not hold her resolution of letting the packet lie a *tell-tale* “to the first person who walked that way.”

Her eyes are continually averted from me—passion swells on her features—and when she speaks to me (which is not often) affected satire breaks from her lips.—Ah! Charles, how can women be so blind to their own advantage, as ever to assume a certain *fierté* that instantly deprives them of every lovely attraction. “A composition of celestial paste is the delightful sex;” and nothing of the *diabolical* should approach, to disturb its œconomy.

We are all going to a subscription ball fourteen miles off—I am to dance with Lady Julia.



Saturday Morning, Six o'Clock.

When I was dressed, Souville informed me the carriages were driving round, and every-one assembled in the saloon ready to step into them. I went down, and found Mortimer marshalling the company. "Each gentleman's chaise," cried he, "shall convey himself and his partner to ———, and back again."

"I object to it!" exclaimed Suffolk.

"Your Grace has no hope of dancing with any Lady here, I presume, my Lord!" said Budenall. "I am to have the honour of Miss Charlotte Pelham's hand," replied the Duke.

"Then," answered Montague, "your Grace has some excellent reason to give, no doubt, for opposing this admirable motion of Mortimer's, which will reconcile to Miss Charlotte so unpolite an expression as the one you uttered."

"I cannot have a better, Sir, than the true one. It is well known where my affections are lodged; and any other than Lady Julia Herbert, will find me very stupid in a *tête-à-tête*: so, for the fair Charlotte's sake, I wish the party better disposed."

"I like your candour exceedingly, my Lord Duke," cried Miss Charlotte Pelham; "you are an uncommonly sincere lover, and, I really think, ought to be indulged in having Lady Julia to grace your carriage this evening—I will be no hindrance to your mutual pleasure—her Ladyship and I must change escorts, though I am ignorant who was destined to be hers!"
—The Duke looked at her with acknowledgment, —at Lady Julia with transport.

"Shall it be as Miss Pelham proposes, Julia?" demanded Pemberton. "Will you go with his Grace?"
—I was just stepping forth, with no little indignation, to assert to the haughty Suffolk my prerogative, when Westbrook, unperceived by any, twitched me by the arm. Pemberton repeated his question. "Positively no, my Lord," answered Lady Julia, with her lovely complexion heightened.

"Your Ladyship would not be so peremptory in your negative on my request," cried Suffolk, in a low voice,
"but

"but for the sake of one who appears to you but too charming— you chuse to go with Osmond—the happy—the seducing Osmond!"

"It is of little consequence whom I go with, my Lord, so it is not the Duke of Suffolk, who gives all around me room to think that I should not be averse to a *tête-à-tête* with his Grace.—Mr. Montague, will you take me under your protection? He kissed her hand: "How happy would so sweet a companion make me!—yet I must acknowledge that it is fair your partner should be preferred." "Well, Lord Budenall! *you* will not refuse me a place in your chaise I hope? "Indeed, my adorable Lady Julia, I must," he answered; "and for the same reason that Montague alledges."

"Budenall," said the Duke, "have you no fears of trusting your mistress with the Marquis—you who are in general so jealous?" "*Is Osmond then to be her partner?*" cried he—"Disturb yourself no further, my Lord; for *I am satisfied.*"

"What a piece of work is here," exclaimed Westbrook, "with your jealousies! Is not Lord Osmond soon to become a wedded man?—Speak, my Lord; pour conviction into their ears, and quiet my Lord Duke's apprehensions—his suspicions."

"I value no one's suspicions," replied I. "I am entitled to the general privilege of escorting my partner—I shall not be passive because the Duke of Suffolk entertains *jealousies*, nor give up a favour I have a right to, lest his Grace should be uneasy.—Is the rule to be observed, Lord Mortimer—every man to convey his partner?"

"It is—it is," was the answer from all but the dissenting Peer. I took Lady Julia's hand—"Stop, dear Osmond," cried Sir James;—"not to gratify the Duke's caprice, but to satisfy my own curiosity, let me beg of you to tell me, Are not—(I speak it publicly)—are not your hand and vows plighted to the woman you love?—Is it possible for you to address another in the *soft language* with sincerity?"

"Such questions would come better at another time, Westbrook—The Ladies around will think
strangely

strangely of me!—However, you shall have your wish; and hear me attest, in full assembly, that my heart—my hand—my vows—are already engaged—and that I can never change the object of my love.” “I thank your Lordship—this is acting honestly!—my cousin Julia is warned how far to trust you, if, in the course of your *tête-à-tête*, you should be tempted (as I have sometimes been, without meaning it) to make love to her.—Lord Budenall, you have had no doubts of the Marquis’s attachment, have you?”

“Not one, upou my honour!” “Seymour, what say you?” “That Lady Julia will not deign to think of me;—and, of course, it makes no difference in my heart, as to the object—whom else she distinguishes.” “And, my Lord Duke,”—“Oh, Sir,—if in Lady Julia’s presence Lord Osmond confesses himself plighted to another, I am satisfied.” “Bravo!” exclaimed the Baronet. “This girl and her lovers occasion us—and me in particular—a cursed deal of trouble.—Come, Emily!”

You will judge of my rapture at handing my beloved to my chaise—I cannot tell you how happy I was all the way to——. We passed the time at the ball in a manner correspondent to our journey thither; and, when it was time to return, came back in the same order that we went.

Soon after our chaise drove from the assembly-room, I renewed the subject nearest my heart, and which I always find an inexhaustible one. I expressed myself with much warmth—Lady Julia answered me by lamenting the clandestine way in which we were situated. She expatiated on the mean light she could not avoid holding it in, and implored me to go up to London on Tuesday or Wednesday, and inform my father of my having offered her my hand. She said, when I left Windsor, she would unfold to Lady Pemberton her attachment.

“And, if she should be averse to my happiness,—what must I expect?”

“Ah, my Lord!—I cannot think of it.”

“It

"It must be thought of, my dear Julia! the worst is to be provided against. Should she say, *I disapprove of the man you have honoured with your affection—you must wed Suffolk*,—what will become of the miserable Osmond?—Must I be thrown from your heart, and given over to a wretched existence?"

"Ah, never—never shall I cease to love!"

"My better angel! let us insure our felicity—consent to make yourself mine—Lady Pemberton will easily forgive what she can at first but term a rash step—and, once the wife of your Henry, what earthly power can tear you from me?"

"Is it thus Lord Osmond advises the woman he means to make his wife?—Ah, you know me not!—Can you, my Lord, urge me to act so unworthily of myself?—I deserve not this!"—She withdrew her hand which I held.

"How have I offended?—Would I induce the beloved of my soul to act in any way that could lessen her in her own opinion?—Ah, no, my amiable Julia!—suspect me not of it—your delicacy is mine—and such a proof of your attachment must lay me under an additional obligation, never to be forgotten.—According to my idea, no deviation from propriety can be alleged by such a measure; but, flattering as it would be to me, I do not ask you to take it, till you have tried Lady Pemberton—till you find her inexorable—which I much fear her partiality to the Duke will render her.—Then must these arms screen my Julia from a hated rival—then must Scotland be the place, where we will seek a sure asylum from the dreaded calamity of your becoming Suffolk's wretched wife, and I a self-destroyer. If you agree not to this point—the one only left us for a *dernier ressort*—what can I think?—That my Julia could profess to love, but not act consistently with the dictates of that passion—Even the very shadow of affection is lost, if she exposes herself to the danger that awaits her.—Very soon after will she, in compliance to the barbarous mandates of a parent, scatter her assurances of *truth and constancy* to the winds, devote her Osmond to perdition, and ally herself to the

man

man she at present most abhors.—Ah, my God!—can Julia support such reflections!”

“Never, my Lord, will I consent to become yours in a way derogatory to my own notions of rectitude—nor have I given you a heart so frail, so much the slave of passion, as to be rendered by it insensible to the admonitions of reason. No! I will endeavour to prove myself worthy of being your wife.—Pray hear me, my Lord—I have dreadful ideas of a marriage that commences in reproaches—How can I carry with me to the altar a mother’s displeasure!—How can that God, who has ever protected me, look with complacency on a union, where a multitude of errors, in consequence of it, rise up against me, and make me culpable in his sight! Shall I be an example, my Lord, of disobedience—of temerity, to my sister? Can I bear to have my name cited by many young women, as a rule for going off with such men as they chuse to give a preference to,—who will forget the *object* that seduced me from duty, and remember only the sanction they borrow from me?—I would submit to any misfortune first!—And then, the very reflection of having made an elopement (abstracted from all other considerations) would be an eternal source of disquiet to me. I should think it a testimony in the opinions of others, and most of all in yours, that much effrontery belongs to my nature—much of that false courage which women have no business with; and I should deserve to lose your esteem ever after—nay, I ought to do so now, if I could entertain a remote wish to become your wife at so dear an expense.”

“Pardon me, my Julia; but our sentiments on this head differ widely. In committing yourself to my protection, you will convince me of the high trust you place in the honour of your Osmond; and depend, my love, I am not so despicable a brute, as to be less attached to you for such a proof of your affection and confidence.—Your objections shall be done away immediately; and, first, as to the *dreadful ideas you have of a marriage that commences in reproaches*, I will convince you”——

“I must

"I must interrupt you, my Lord—you cannot remove my prejudices against a measure to which I have the strongest repugnance. I have often shuddered at hearing of my acquaintances embarking in similar enterprizes, that promised nothing but contempt and misery during life. Will you suffer me to beg an instance of your tenderdeſs, my Lord?"

"*Soul of my ſoul, and end of all my wiſhes!* I live but to oblige you—Speak, and judge of my paſſion by my ready obedience."

"The favour I beg, my Lord, is—never again to mention this hateful ſcheme!"

"Unkind, Julia!—Ah, how little ſenſible is your heart to love!"

"Indeed, my Lord, it is equally ſo with—your own.—Do you aſſent to what I aſk?"

"Conditionally. I will not again urge a propoſal ſo diſagreeable to you, unleſs the near danger of loſing you makes it neceſſary. If ſuch a miſfortune threatens, I muſt aſſure you, that no reaſon you can have to allege will ſatiſfy me; and, tho' every infernal demon ſhould be leagued againſt me, I ſhall ſurmount all oppoſition, and, as ſurely as we exiſt, fly with you to the North. There ſhall the prieſt give a wife more valuable, more loved, than ever female was, to the arms of the faithfulleſt, the fondeſt huſband, whoſe whole felicity will conſiſt in ſtudying her happineſs—who will prove himſelf her lover—her friend—her protector—nor ſhall an anxious thought approach her dear boſom, which his aſſiduity and vigilance can ſcreen her from."

"Ah, my Lord!—my dear Oſmond!—never muſt I be yours on ſuch terms! Render me not miſerable by inſiſting on this unpardonable ſtep!—Let circumſtances be at the worſt—I cannot—will not agree to it."

"How, Lady Julia!—are you ſerious!—Great heaven, how unexpected is this ſtroke!—Then I have only been in a happy illuſion!—Why, Madam, was I flattered with the aſſurance of your love?—I perceive the cauſe—it was merely to make my torments ſeverer when you thought proper to diſcard me.—But I ſhould

have

have been sufficiently wretched—your pride would have found triumph enough, had you ingenuously confessed your sentiments, and said, *Osmond* you excite my compassion—but *I feel nothing more for you—I cannot give you my hand; it is destined by my family—and myself, for another*—Ungenerous girl! your heart is far indeed from being the *slave of passion!*—I paused—She looked at me with gentle reproach—I threw my arms around her, and leaned my head upon her shoulder—She instantly disengaged me from her. “Thus it is,” cried she, “I have always heard, with your sex;—let you know your power, and you use it to the most tyrannical purpose. I never experienced the justness of that observation before, my Lord; but I am glad to have a specimen of it in these early days—However, be persuaded, that neither entreaties nor violence can sway me from what I think a right mode of conduct.”

“Your Ladyship now finds it convenient, I see, to put an end to my aspiring hopes—Assure yourself, the sacrifice you wish shall be complete—I will not, through my exulting rival’s heart, pierce yours—No!—for your sake he shall be spared—My death will satisfy your cruelty, and rid me of the agonies that knowing he possesses you must inflict—perhaps it may add transport to your joys!—I shall persecute you no further—I will leave you contented, whilst I become the prey of despair and horror.”

She wept—I was penetrated at her tears—I threw myself on my knees, and again clasped my arms about her.

“Pardon, my Julia, this impetuosity!—Already it is sincerely repented of—Be kind and impute it all to love. When I think of losing you, I am deprived of reason.—Say, my dearest Julia, that I am forgiven!”

“The moon is extremely bright, my Lord. If the postillions look back—if any of the servants ride by, and see you on your knees, what must they think of me?—I beg your Lordship will not subject me to censure.”

“Am I pardoned?—Dear Lady Julia, pronounce that I am.”

“Your

"Your Lordship must excuse my answering till you rise."—I resumed my seat.

"Now, Madam, tell me that you no longer hold me in displeasure. Consider the origin of my fault—think, my angelic girl, with what fervency I adore you—and then judge whether my breast must not be a chaos of destructive passions!—As yet I know not whether I am to be blessed with my Julia—or, in giving her up, bid an eternal adieu to every comfort—to every happiness."

"Indeed, my Lord, I am not displeased with you. I thought your expressions unkind. I deserved them not—that you must know—but they shall be forgotten."

"I cannot thank you sufficiently for this goodness—And now allow me to ask, were it possible that obedience should make you yield to become Suffolk's wife, in violation to the wishes of your heart, do you suppose such a sacrifice could be grateful in the sight of heaven?—But, oh!—if you abandon the object who has so long loved you with unabated constancy—who has sought for you with unwearied assiduity—who has never had you out of his thoughts from the first moment he beheld you—who has, you say, been so fortunate as to conciliate your affections—will no pangs approach your heart at the reflection of his long sufferings—at his untimely fate?—for never—ah, my Julia! never will I behold the day that makes the detestable Suffolk lord of my angel—her whom the Almighty decreed, I thought a few hours ago, to be my bride!"—Her tears fell on my hand, which enclosed one of hers—my eyes shed drops of sympathy.

"Why are you so silent, my Julia?—You have almost banished hope from my bosom---your mother will never consent to our union, whilst she has a prospect of allying you to the Duke---I am destitute of the means of offering settlements equal to my wishes, or her expectations---my poverty will deprive me of you--- Julia! life of my soul! not one word of comfort to bestow on your Henry!"—She withdrew herself from my embrace.

"You

“ You are too free, my Lord, I beg you will consider, that I cannot allow of liberties even from you, who are dearer to me than all the world. My resolution of not going off with you is unalterable ; yet believe me, when I assure you, that, if I am not united to my Osmond, no other shall claim my vows. You are a stranger to the firmness of my soul—no persuasions—no threats—no hardships shall induce me to swerve from this promise.—I cannot be less unhappy than yourself, if it is my destiny to be separated from you.—Why should I be confused at owning it, or that I love you beyond expression ? You are well entitled to the acknowledgment of both facts. Your sentiments and my own are correspondent in point of marrying persons whom we dislike ; and I had sooner die than be guilty of perjury in the sight of God. Be satisfied with this ; and let us not imagine, Lady Pemberton, who has hitherto proved herself the most indulgent of mothers, will be tyrannical where the felicity of her child is depending. You will go up to London on Tuesday or Wednesday—This duplicity towards my friends is shocking—To preserve it many days longer must make me criminal in my own eyes. You will see, and act ingenuously with the Duke of Westmorland. You say he is cruel—he has ever shewn an indifference towards my Osmond. As your father, he ought to be informed of your intentions. Be his answer what it may, I shall still be devoted to you, and ready to give you my hand on Lady Pemberton’s consenting.—You owe him not the obligations that I do my amiable mother. The time of your absence shall be employed in bringing her over to our wishes—in dismissing Suffolk’s addresses, and in reconciling my brother to my rejecting of him. Be at rest, my Lord—suppose not Lady Pemberton so inflexible—and know me incapable of loving any other.”—In spite of her reproof, I clasped her to my bosom—I dried her eyes with my handkerchief—and promised to be all she wished me.

You see, Montague, I can have no further room to hope that she will marry me clandestinely—By heaven,

ven, she is right!—I venerate—I respect her for it beyond measure—though I should be made happier, were her notions of propriety less strict. Would I could read my fate in the book of futurity! Should I be deprived of such a woman through the abominable principles of ambition, or rather of avarice, there could not exist under the canopy of heaven, an object so miserable as myself! Though I am satisfied of her love, I am not of the firmness of which she boasts, where her mother's displeasure is in question—on any other occasion I could trust to it.—Good God! is it not the height of absurdity to imagine the Pemberton's will listen to my proposals? Supposing I offer to settle all the fortune I can call my own upon Lady Julia, they will naturally ask me what is to become of her children? I have little to plead with them in my favour—a noble, impartial way of thinking is become in a great measure obsolete; and, irritated as they are against my father, they can scarcely avoid confounding my sentiments with his.—Ah! that father Montague!—the unnatural Westmorland could, if he pleased, make every-thing easy—he might render my alliance a more desirable object for her than Suffolk's—but he would first see me dragged to a wretched receptacle for maniacs—and because I dare to aim at happiness, he will deprive me of every shilling of my patrimony.—I know him well—avaricious, unfeeling, and implacable—Can I build on expectations from such a man?—Of this be convinced, however, that Suffolk must fight well ere he robs me of my prize.

I should be glad to meet you in London when I go up, that we may consult on the best method of breaking to my father this important affair. You say that you have business to complete previous to your nuptials, which Lord Beaumont's illness obliged you to leave unfinished in town. You must make it convenient to be there on Friday: till then I hope to protract my stay at Windsor.

* * * * *

Saturday

Saturday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

We have been on a very agreeable party some miles down the river. Mortimer, determined that we should not want for variety of amusements, had, unknown to any of the company, prepared every-thing in ample order for this entertainment, and after breakfast asked if we should make a little excursion by water? The proposal was universally liked:—the carriages were ordered, and they conveyed us to the river-side, where we were a good deal surpris'd at seeing three or four small beautiful yachts ready to receive us. Several of the neighbouring Ladies and Gentlemen, whom my Lord had invited to join us, were on board before we arriv'd. We put off from the shore, and were followed by three bands of music, in three separate boats.—It was elysium!—The fineness of the day—the magnificence of the vessels, which, like Cleopatra's galley, had streamers of various-coloured silks (the regal purple most illustrious) fluttering in the wind—the exquisite sound of the instruments played on by masterly performers—the unexpectedness of the scene—and, above all, the lovely form of Lady Julia—whose countenance was more blooming than Hebe's—whose smiles I enjoyed—all serv'd to enrapture my soul and transport my senses. The pleasure was diffusive. Suffolk sat on the right hand of my beloved; I was placed on her left. He thought he was as much in her good graces, as I in reality knew myself to be. Westbrook and Miss Edgcumb were sensible to the satisfaction that lovers feel on such occasions; as were Colonel Melvin and the eldest Miss Pelham, and some others, whom I cannot take the trouble of mentioning. Sir John Benyon endeavour'd to make Lady Almeria sensible of his passion; but the *laugher-loving* girl jest'd at his sollicitude to please, and in a way even diverting to him. She is something of a coquet. I pity his attachment to her—she will never reward it! If all were not alike happy, they at least seem'd amus'd, which is a great point gain'd where so numerous a set is assembled. We stopp'd and dined at the Castle at Rich-

mond—I shall always wish it to flourish from the precious minutes I spent there this day! In the evening we went over to Hampton Court; took a cursory view of the palace, time not admitting of more; ordered tea and coffee at the Toy; and returned by water and the pale light of the moon to Windsor, the same music accompanying us all the way back.

On Tuesday next we are to have a masquerade, to which upwards of three hundred people are invited. I tell Mortimer he certainly holds consultations with forcerers. He has shewn me the plan of this entertainment; and the appearance there will be of enchantment, must create many suspicions of the sort in the bosoms of his guests—Not such sort of *enchantment* do I mean, as Mrs. Cornelly advertises persons to expect at her mansion on particular nights—but of a far superior order, which will have the better effect, from none of the strangers being apprized of the scenes which will be exhibited to them. He manages exceedingly well; for not the least bustle appears in preparations—no one is disturbed with the noise of mechanics, the hurry of domestics, or the *busy importance* of an opiated director; as you and I have been harrassed to death at observing, on like occasions, in the house of the Barone Della Santuville.—Had Mortimer existed in the time of Charles the Second, he would have been a first favourite with that dissipated monarch—not that his principles have the least tendency to immorality; but that he is so astonishingly clever in finding out, and putting happily into execution, the most refined diversions. He, at the same time, gratifies the benevolence of his heart, by giving bread to a number of artificers, that bless the generous Lord who employs, and pays them munificently. His fortune is large, and he lives up to it in a manner that does him honour.—Lady Julia told me she would appear in the dress of Perdita: I begged leave to be her Florizel, to which, with a smile, she immediately assented.

And now I will retire to bed, where I have not been these two nights—yet I regret each moment that is lost in dull forgetfulness at Windsor.

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Sunday Morning.

Your letter is just brought me*, which tells me that you are in London, and all impatience to return and call Louisa yours—so you have prevailed on her to cut off a few days of the allotted time, and give you her hand the morning after your arrival in Hampshire.—All this is well, and I rejoice at it, though it will carry me to town a day sooner than I intended.—But, dear Montague, think you, that your friend in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields will be as expeditious as you hope for? Your *impatience* and his pen can keep no proportion I fear. Those lawyers are plaguy tedious fellows! as many an anxious lover has pronounced. We are entirely at their mercy; and, like despots, they exert their privilege without remorse. Let me know certainly how long you *must* stay in London, and I will take my measures accordingly; but I absolutely cannot stir before Wednesday, *coute qui coute*. Make what use you please of my house—think it yours, for I do. Your servant shall carry you this packet; so farewell!

OSMOND.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House, Monday Night.

A Few lines I will address to my Julia, just to say that my amiable Montague is gone up to London, and that directly on his return (which he supposed would be next Thursday) I am to part with the name of Sydney for ever!—I know not why he was so urgent

* It does not appear.

for anticipating the ceremony. The third day in the next week, which was the time allotted for its celebration, will arrive soon enough, and it was scarcely worth changing the day: however, his wishing to have it so, was sufficient with me to give up my own will on the occasion.

This night you are immersed in all the woes of Sigismunda—may your fate bear no resemblance to her wretched one! and may I shortly embrace my fair friend the bride of her beloved and admirable hero!

I am a good deal indisposed with a cold, which has caused me to be feverish; and, as it lies chiefly in my head, gives me much pain, and renders me unfit for writing.—Adieu, my sweet Julia! We shall shortly meet—what happiness is in the thought!

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To the MARQUIS of OSMOND.

St. James's-Square.

OH! Osmond, what pangs will your sympathizing heart experience at reading the inclosed!—Peruse it now—and then join me in bemoaning that heaven ever created so unfortunate a being as the undone Montague!

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

THE subject of my letter will certainly be no less surprising, than it will be painful to you, Sir! The voice of friendship loudly calls upon me to save two persons, who share my warmest esteem, from the
gaping

gaping gulph of misery which lies before them, and into which they will inevitably plunge, if my extricating hand does not preserve them.

Flushed as you are with happiness,—anticipating those ideal joys that must never be realized,—I take upon me the unpleasing task of awaking you from your flattering illusions, and pointing out to you the path of honour, which I am sure you will pursue. Let me inform you, Sir Charles, that a connection with Lady Louisa Sydney will be the bane of your felicity. Beautiful and virtuous as she is—does not this assertion appear paradoxical?—Too soon will I clear the mystery!

Mr. Melmoth, whose libertine character you must be acquainted with, more than two years ago, proposed to Sir George Sommerville for Lady Louisa. He was rejected, but had found means to make himself an advocate in her breast, that almost stifled every impression of duty, and silenced each reasonable plea that her uncle could offer against him. To be short, her meetings with Melmoth were frequent—her correspondence with him more so—Sir George discovered both, and vowed to Lady Louisa, that, if she held any further intercourse with so profligate a creature, he would cast her off as an alien to his affection and fortune. Her gentle nature was overcome by his menaces, and she wrote to her lover a letter of Sir George's dictating, which put a total end to his courtship. It seems Mr. Melmoth's vindictive spirit to this hour resents it; and, ignorant of Lady Louisa's having executed it through compulsion, vows vengeance on her.

When you arrived, Sir George, foreseeing that you meditated addressing his Niece, partly by persuasion, and partly by threats, made her vow to accept of your hand, if you offered it. Dependent as Lady Louisa is upon her uncle, what could she do, but bend her timid inclination to the stern yoke of his tyrannic will? She fulfilled her promise, and is now the devoted victim of an unkind uncle's caprice. I am satisfied he means well, and thinks to ensure her happiness by a connection with a man of so exalted a character as yours; but, alas! he forms an improper

judgment in such a case, where certainly the uncontrolled choice should be permitted to determine its object. She is at this moment ill in bed—a feverish complaint, that attacks her head, discovers truths which in her senses she would wish to have buried in oblivion. Mr. Melmoth is the person who occupies her thoughts—she raves of him—and execrates the hour that was witness to his dismissal. Let me ask you Sir,—can a man of your humanity, who possesses so much tenderness for Lady Louisa, wish to entail lasting misery on her?—Impossible!—and now demand of yourself—Would you be satisfied to take to your arms a woman who must wish that Melmoth supplied your place—who must assume your name with horror—and whose fraudulent endearments must be as disgusting to her to practise, as they would be delightful to you to receive, were they the genuine dictates of her heart?—You can scarcely believe me just in entertaining such ideas of her whom you imagined sincerely attached to you—you almost blame me for infecting you with them—yet I have given you no more than the real character of Louisa after she becomes your wife.—Leave this pursuit, Sir Charles—listen to the admonitions of friendship, or you will too late repent your rashness. I am ignorant how you can break off the affair with honour to each party—your good sense, your delicacy must instruct you. If Sir George did but guess that you were acquainted with the circumstances of his Niece’s situation, the consequences would be dreadful to her—That hint is enough to guide you.—The melancholy way Lady Louisa is in urged me to this ungrateful office. I am sure I have every thing to expect from your amiable heart—therefore dispel all apprehension of suffering from the confidence I repose in you. Lest my letter should undergo the aspersions that anonymous epistles in general deserve, I sign my name, at once to convince you of the veracity of its contents, and of the opinion I have of your honour. I am also with truth, dear Sir,

Your real friend, and well-wisher,

M. SOMMERVILLE.

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What have I done to deserve so cruel a disappointment!—Ungenerous Louisa!—One word—one single word should have made me cease to molest you—unhappy as it must have rendered me, I could not have condemned, but pitied you!—beautiful—adorable—artful girl!—Oh! my Osmond, what scenes does recollection bring back to my view!—how plainly now do I perceive the disgust that laboured in her bosom!—Heaven and earth! what an expression!—*disgust!*—and am I then *disgustful* to my Louisa?—*My Louisa!*—Fond pen—whither dost thou lead me?—I must teach thee another language.—

* * * * *

I have heard of this Melmoth—this invader of my right.—By heaven! he never shall call her his.—I will find him, and demand satisfaction for the wrongs he has done me—my sword shall revenge them—and shew him what it is to usurp the affections of ————

Oh, Osmond! ———— No—

I will not seek his death—she loves him—curse on the sentence!—and I love her *too well*, to make myself yet more hateful in her eyes! ———— “*Fraudulent endearments!*—*wish Melmoth in my place!*” ———— Damnation!—Ah! had she but known my sentiments—had she known that without her heart her person could have no charms for me—much dissimulation might have been spared.—Let Melmoth enjoy both—she will soon repent. ———— How well do I remember the emotions that invaded her breast when I first declared my passion!—She would not listen to me, till recollection brought back the vow she had made Sir George—and then what reluctance appeared in her countenance, when she hesitatingly consented to regard me as her lover!—Fool that I was! I thought it virgin delicacy—and idolized her for it—

How to appease this tempest in my breast! ———— What

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measures

measures to pursue!—I will not be a tame, fawning wretch—I have been used abominably ill.—Let me think how I must act.

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I have it—I will immediately order my chaise, and go down to Sommerville-House—there will I reproach her in the bitterest terms for her artifice—her perfidy—I will bid her rise from the bed of sickness which my unhappy addresses have cast her on—I will assure her that she need never henceforward suffer even an anxious thought to intrude from the expectation of a connection with me—that the discovery of her falsehood has entirely cured me—and that she is at liberty to dispose of her hand to the man who has so long been in possession of her affections.———Oh! I cannot be so contemptible a villain as to distress her tender nature!—Can she account for the impulses of her heart!—and surely she is sufficiently punished in being hindered from following its dictates!—I am in honour bound to screen her from Sir George's displeasure, by concealing the secret, and taking upon myself the whole blame of this unexpected breach.———Osmond, had you seen with how affectionate an air she bade me adieu,—with what officious tenderness she followed me to the hall door!—The instant I stepped into my carriage, I looked at her—tears stood trembling in her eyes—they seemed tears of sorrow at my departure—No doubt they fell in abundance when the chaise drove off, at the idea of its being so soon to convey her from the neighbourhood of her lover!———Perhaps Lady Sommerville is mistaken———That is impossible!—Has not Louisa's perturbed mind brought on an alarming illness?—Does she not rave of Melmoth?—Lady Sommerville was actuated merely by compassion in the measure she took—to me she always expressed the warmest regard for her niece—she felt her sufferings, and strove to relieve them———Oh, Louisa Sydney!

My

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My spirits are much composed.—What a folly it is to sink under an irremediable misfortune!—Though she is so closely linked to my heart, that, to separate her from it, must rend the tenderest half away—it shall be done. I will resolutely undertake the task, and be again an unfettered, indifferent fellow. I will learn to despise all poor wretches who are under the influence of *petticoated* hypocrites,—who can forget the dignity of men, and become winders of silk,—connoisseurs in aprons,—who receive lessons how the needle should be directed to flourish gold on cloth,—who make themselves spaniels to obtain a look, a smile, from one of the deceitful sex — Forgive me, heaven! such a tame blockhead have I been!—but there is an everlasting end of it.——— I have written to Lady Louisa, and here transcribe my letter. I am pleased with it;—it will give her room to suppose that I can stifle my passion, if not immediately conquer it—and that I can refrain from tormenting her with complaints and reproaches.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

CONDESCEND, Madam, to read the apologies of a man penetrated with confusion, and overcome by distress for having (tho' innocently) been the cause of your enduring so much uneasiness. Dispel your anxieties; and from henceforward be convinced, that a Lady, were she even loved by me to distraction, has very little to fear from my persecution, when once I know that her heart is biased towards another object.—To yours I refer you for an explanation.

I implore your pardon for the constraint I have laid you under; at the same time entreat you to remember, as a palliation of my error, that, when I presumed to beg the honour of your hand, provided you could give it in unison with your affections, you answered, *They*

were entirely disengaged.——It is far from my intention to hint at making your Ladyship a single reproach—No—dear as it must cost me to renounce you, it shall be done without a murmur to—or of you.—May you be blessed!—may the happy man who is to call you his, prove the best and tenderest husband in the world!—and may you, Madam, never experience a pang from the recollection of what he sustains who gives you up for ever!

When my spirits are calmer, I will write to Sir George—perhaps by this conveyance; and make out some plea for abandoning Sommerville-house.—It will be best that Lady Louisa should take no notice of having heard from me.

I have the honour to be, with much sincerity,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

Humble servant,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Did I ever love her ardently, my Osmond? I think not. I could not be so soon composed enough to write with such *nonchalance*. I have been deceived in myself all this while. Your boyish, romantic stuff infected me!—Away then, Louisa!—I root you from my breast!—"all my fond love thus do I blow to heaven—'tis gone!"—Fly with those fascinating charms to your Melmoth's arms—Perdition seize him!—Shall he lead her to the altar—there receive her vows of eternal fidelity and love—gaze on her form till his senses are absorbed in delight?—I behold his raptures—she partakes of them—Oh, damn him! damn him!

* * * * *

Friendship can yet impart comfort worth living for!
—I just now observed Stanley carry out my pistols—
he

he little suspects the cause of his unhappy master's agitation to be as terrible as it is.—I did not recal them—heaven has renovated my soul—and I despise so cowardly an act as that of suicide. I will leave London, and bury myself in the unfrequented haunts of Elwellyn.—I expect to see you this night—to-morrow I will afford you all the assistance in my power with your father in the important point you have so much at heart, and then bid a long farewell to London. That I may be saved the trouble—the agony of a personal relation of this cursed event—that you may be prepared for the situation you will find me in—I have taken up the pen—The greatest part of the night has been spent in writing—Just as I was getting into bed, Lady Sommerville's letter was brought me. It banished sleep from my eyes, and planted anguish in my breast—never will it depart from thence!—I must make out a few lines to Sir George Sommerville. Before I seal my packet I will write,—and enclose you a copy.

Farewel, my dear Osmond! Never may the calamity approach your heart, that bears a similitude to what I endure!

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Wednesday Morning, 4 o'Clock.

To Sir GEORGE SOMMERVILLE.

IN what light, Sir, must I appear to you, when you have done me the favour of perusing this letter!—Let me find an advocate in your sensibility, that will induce you to compassionate, though you must condemn, the most unfortunate of men. The stings of my own conscience will but too severely chastise the imprudence of my conduct!—Without keeping you longer in suspense, know that—I am unworthy of Lady Louisa Sydney.—What tortures do I not suffer in this avowal!

avowal!—Oh, Sir George! you who know her excellence—how dear she is to my heart—judge of my distress!—Last night I was drawn into deep play at Stapleton's—before three o'clock this morning, I arose from the gaming-table, destitute of the last guinea I owned on earth.—I will not ally that amiable woman to poverty—my soul is above the idea—and I have sworn never to be hers. I must quit the kingdom directly; and, as an additional punishment, conceal myself from all my friends, whose society would be too high a gratification for so lost a wretch as I am to experience.

Dear Sir George, supply to Lady Louisa the part I intended to have acted—make her blessed as mortal can be—and the surest way to obliterate me from her heart (for I had reason to be flattered with the hope of being loved) is to prevail on her to make choice of some more fortunate man; and do you smile upon their union. Break my situation to Lady Louisa in the way you judge most proper—I cannot write to her—and assure her my whole soul is at this moment poured forth in prayers for her.

Adieu, Sir,—think of me, as of one much attached to you; and pity the miserable

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

London, Wednesday Morning.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

*Windsor,
Wednesday Morning, 11 o'Clock.*

YOU will be surprised, my good friend, at receiving a letter from me, instead of one from Osmond.—Your servant has brought your packet, who said it was of the utmost consequence that it should be delivered immediately into the hands of the Marquis.—I am shocked to tell you, dear Montague, that Osmond is by this time many miles distant from Windsor. As
matters

matters are circumstanced, it is best he should be so.—He had a rencontre with the Duke of Suffolk about two o'clock this morning. His adversary's business he has done most effectually I believe. Suffolk, it is thought, cannot live many hours.—The unfortunate Osmond is fled, but whither I am ignorant.—There are many under this roof irritated beyond description at our unhappy friend—none more so than Lady Pemberton and her son.—Caroline has fallen under her mother's displeasure, for the zealous warmth with which she undertook his and her sister's cause—But what shall I say of the wretched Julia?—Ah, Montague, her fate is marked with woe! and what may be the end I tremble to think. It is impossible for me to stir from hence at present, or I would be the bearer to you of these unwelcome tidings.

I condemn myself for having been instrumental to such a scene of distress. My wishes to render my friends happy, have proved the very means of inflicting misery on them.—Your servant is impatient to return—I will not detain him—This is no place to invite you to.—In the evening I shall send you the particulars of this affair—I scarcely know what I write.—Dear Sir Charles, I am,

Much yours,

MORTIMER.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor, Wednesday Afternoon.

I NOW sit down, dear Montague, to give you the account I promised; first saying, by way of preface, that, as you must be acquainted with your friend's passion for Lady Julia, and of her reciprocal return to it, there is no occasion for my detaining you from the knowledge of the last dreadful scene, by a repetition of circumstances too prolix for the present occasion.

We

We gave a masked ball last night.—At ten o'clock the apartments were almost filled; when Lady Percival, Miss Edgcumb, and Lady Julia, entered the principal room, with the last group of masks that had arrived. Lady Julia was dressed as Perdita; the two others, as attendant shepherdesses. I could only suspect the first-mentioned to be my sister from her shape and air, being totally ignorant of the habit she intended to assume. I will confess I was struck with the loveliness of her whole appearance, and drew near to discover whether it was Lady Julia. An elegant Florizel approached; he claimed her with much ardour as his partner for the night. He addressed her in the words of Shakespeare: she answered him in the same style. A large circle formed around them. The roof echoed with sounds of admiration. The men wished themselves Florizel; the women envied Perdita. Charlotte Pelham came up to me—"Is not that shepherd, think you, Lord Osmond?" cried she.

"No," I answered: "if you want Lord Osmond, child, to make you the like professions that amorous swain has done to his pretty shepherdess, you will find him there;"—and I pointed to Pemberton, whose height is much about Osmond's, you know. He wore a domino wrapt close about him, which would I thought conceal the difference of person, even from the perspicuous eye of an enamoured woman; for such the infernal Charlotte is—and I, aware of her passion for the excellent Henry, guarded myself in my answer.

"Do you know me, pray, Lord Mortimer?" demanded she—

"Certainly!" I replied: "you are Lady Maria Harley. Lord Osmond's attachment to you is no secret; and I am glad to find you are not indifferent to him!" I turned from her; and told Pemberton, if he wished for an adventure, to pass himself on the Lady I marked out to him as Lord Osmond. He instantly followed, and led her away.—I met Westbrook.

"Mortimer," said he, "I am very unhappy!—I fear all will not go well.—As I passed Suffolk, I overheard

heard him venting passionate exclamations to his mean follower Jack Ainsley; and too surely he suspects Osmond to be Julia's lover!

"You fear without cause, my dear James; exclaimed I. "Be not alarmed—Do you put the Duke on a wrong scent, as I have already done Charlotte Pelham—they will be kept apart from our shepherd and shepherdess, and be no further observers of their particular behaviour to each other, which, on my soul, it would be cruel to prevent!—Nay, we could not prevent it!—they are lost in contemplation of each other—they are transported with love, and unmindful of the consequences.

"What you advise shall be done," returned he: "I will watch his haughty Grace with the attention of an Argus!"

In some time after I passed by Osmond and his Julia. They were sequestered from the throng, and seated in a retired corner of the room; he talking earnestly to her, in an attitude the finest that can be imagined—I never beheld a more animated, a more impassioned figure. She sat in a reclining position, giving a greedy ear to all he uttered.—Montague, what a subject just then would they have made for the pencil of Sir Joshua Reynolds!—I hovered near them, that I might seem to make a third in the conversation, if any unwelcome person approached.—He saw and beckoned to me.

"Mortimer," cried he, "you must assist in obtaining for me the favour I solicit."

"Name it," exclaimed I.

"I am urging my angelic girl," he replied, "to let me possess a lock of these beautiful tresses."

"Surely she does not refuse you!" "Oh, she does indeed! and alleges such reasons as never before were thought of. I swear I cannot see where the impropriety of her assenting would rest.—I am to leave her tomorrow—perhaps for years—nay, it may be—so cruel is she in her inflexible resolution—that we shall never meet again!—and yet she refuses me the only comfort I could have after our separation." "Insensible Julia!

—She

—She loves you not, my dear Osmond—she would fain persuade herself that she does; but her heart is of too frigid a nature—abandon her without regret!—a more indulgent *fair-one*—one who will not stand upon such punctilious, empty forms, when the happiness of the man she boasts to love is at stake—is ready to oblige you in every wish she can gratify—Charlotte Pelham would be transported, did you make her such a request—*she* would dare to do much more for *her* Osmond!”—“*Her Osmond*, Lord Mortimer!” cried Julia.

“No, my dear love,” exclaimed the Marquis; “she cannot give me that title!—Never whilst I exist shall any woman have a right to it but Julia; and may I be eternally abhorred by you, if for a single moment I forget the vows of fidelity I have made you!”

“You do not doubt my tenderness, my Lord, though my brother does!” “He must doubt it,” said I, unless you immediately give him what he requests!” “It is not your suspicion, Lord Mortimer, that induces me to consent; but that my Lord asks it as a proof of my affection.” “Well, dear Julia, I am pleased to hear you say so,” returned I; “and now I no longer distrust your love.—Retire with me into this gallery—no one has entered it yet—and Osmond shall take the lock from the pretty neck which it at present helps to adorn.”—We all three entered the gallery—they unmasked—he seated her, unrolled a curl that hung carelessly upon her neck, and cut off part of it—He pressed it to his lips—he put it in his bosom. “And now, my Julia,” cried he, “as I mean to depart when this happy night’s revel breaks up—as I shall have no other opportunity, let me snatch the present one of taking my leave in the manner I wish—our mutual friend has been already witness to the solemn dedication I have made you of my heart—again, in his presence, I swear, by all my hopes of happiness, that no misfortune, no distance of place or time, shall ever weaken the ardour of my passion, or shake my constancy. You will ever be present to my thoughts—for you will I support life—and in you center all my desires.

fires.—If my father *only* refuses his sanction to my addresses, remember your promise—But, if Lady Pemberton should be alike barbarous,—if my Julia perseveres in her dreadful determination of not flying with me,—I can have no prospect of seeing her again shortly—must not the pangs of absence be mitigated by our corresponding?—You will not refuse to receive and answer my letters?”

“What can I say?” replied she—“But I will consider of it. If reflection discovers any error in my doing so, I will inform you of it, in my return to your first letter, which will acquaint me more fully how we are to conduct ourselves.—Though that intercourse should be suppressed, never doubt my attachment—and that I will sooner die, my Lord, than cease to love you with the utmost tenderness.” “I am but half satisfied, dear Julia!” he cried. “However, we will talk further of this in the course of the night—and I will not lose the precious minute of bidding you adieu.” He embraced her two or three times—she wept—he was himself equally affected. I heard persons approaching the gallery—I advised them to put on their masks hastily, and leave the apartment. They obeyed, and we returned to the company. The unfortunate couple rejoined the dance. I sought out Westbrook, and asked him whether his apprehensions were dissipated? “No, faith,” cried he; “I have followed Suffolk with unwearied assiduity, and perceive there are negotiations passing between him and Charlotte Pelham. I overheard her say, *Your Grace may be assured that they are together, and that Lord Mortimer is in the secret.* She then spoke so low, that I could only catch a word here and there. At length he exclaimed, “By Heaven, I will be satisfied!—The artful, dissembling Osmond shall stand confessed in open daylight a villain,—and learn that I will not be injured with impunity.”—I then sent Emily Edgcumb to interrupt their conversation—she has never since left his side, nor do I chuse to be very distant from them, lest, provoked as he must be at her detaining him from the search he wishes to make, his violent temper should
break

break forth towards her, in terms not consonant with politeness—and, to say a truth, I should not be sorry for a slight motive to revenge on him the misery he is the occasion of to Osmond.” I implored Westbrook, for Lady Mortimer’s and my sake, to avoid any quarrel with him; and represented the disagreeable circumstances which must attend a thing of the sort happening amongst our guests. I said the Duke’s suspicions were of little consequence, as Osmond would in a few hours leave Windsor, and the affair must so soon become public;—that to keep them asunder for the night was the only matter to be attended to. “But when every-one unmask, and he finds that the Marquis and Julia have been together all the evening, he will be outrageous.—I am ignorant of any method that could be used to hinder bad effects—Lady Mortimer, to prevent intruders, mentioned, in her cards of invitation, that every-one was to throw aside their mask at supper—as it turns out, it was devilishly unlucky!—Were I to ask Osmond to change his dress, I must tell him my reason; and that would at once determine him not to comply.—What is to be done?” “Upon my soul I do not know—your apprehension is just:—however we must leave all to fortune!”—As we parted Pemberton took me by the arm: “On my word,” cried he, “I never had such strong love made to me by any woman, as by Charlotte Pelham. She is a downright Eloisa! She told me she would convince me of the fervidity of her passion, by offering to become mine on my own conditions—that she would resign the form of marriage to those who knew not what it was to love with the transport that she did. She reproached me for giving back her letter, and denying to bestow on her the least mark of tenderness—and added that she had discovered, it was neither Henrietta Marchmont, or Maria Harley, I died for—but Julia Herbert. She advised me to drop that pursuit, and be kind to her wishes, threatening else to lay a scene of horror and confusion. What think you, Mortimer?—The amorous Jezebel must have cause for this conjecture—Is Osmond attached to Julia?” “A jealous woman’s

woman's assertion," replied I, "I should never pin my faith upon—But what answer made you?" "I assured her, that, though she had mistaken me for another, she should find me not undeserving of the secret I had got to the knowledge of—I lamented the hard heart of the man she esteemed; and advised her, as a friend, not to let her attachment carry her so far as to breathe in his ear an offer like the one that, in an unguarded moment, I heard escape her lips. — She seemed frightened; and, exclaiming "Lord Pemberton's voice!" flew from me.—If Osmond loves Julia, I can well account for her cruelty to Suffolk! Do you believe that he does?" "It is evident that *you believe so*.—But should it be the case, you cannot be sorry!" "You are wrong; I should be extremely sorry. I admire and regard him; but his father would disapprove of the alliance—and my sister shall enter into no connection, where every part of the lover's family do not zealously wish for the union.—Have we not been told of the sarcastic manner in which Westmorland speaks of us?—But, putting that out of the case, there are deformities in his character of so atrocious a die, as must make us abhor the thought of seeing a sister become his daughter." "Pemberton, your terms are too strong!--*Deformities of so atrocious a die!*"—"I know not what you may do; but I class under those words, his having broken the heart of the most amiable, the most beautiful woman that is said Europe ever produced, who was forced by relentless parents to give him her hand---his having"——"Well, well! we need enter into no discussion of his faults---let his conscience answer them. But, though you may be justly prejudiced against the Duke, certainly your good sense will not allow you to be so against Osmond! It would be very illiberal to inflict on a son an undeserved misery, because his father is a wretch! You know Osmond to be altogether as amiable as Westmorland is the reverse---suppose Julia loves him!" "How!"—"Nay, I only make the supposition!" "Then hear me---were she to love him to distraction---never—never would I give her to him. Suffolk is the man I have,

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as well as her mother, destined her for—but, if she chuses to bid us all defiance, and enter into a family that will despise her, because she has not fortune suitable to its avaricious wishes—I will no more behold her, or think myself her brother.”——I was exceedingly shocked—He left me, and my first thought was, how to supply that unjust deficiency of fortune, which would, I feared, be the cause of poor Julia’s unhappiness. I soon struck upon a plan, and resolved to propose it when matters were riper.

As we sat down to supper, the rule was observed—every one took off their mask. I saw Suffolk, the instant that Osmond dropped his, go up and whisper something in his ear. The other bowed, and answered, with a smile, “Your Grace is very much in the right! you may depend it shall be as you desire.” I could not suspect, from the countenance of either, that a challenge was given; and imagined that Suffolk had discarded his doubts.

The ill-fated pair seemed inspired with a desire of making the most of the transient bliss they then enjoyed—Osmond forgot to preserve appearances, and Julia was the portrait of felicity. Pleasure sparkled in their eyes—love glowed on their cheeks—and smiles revelled on their lips. We arose from table, and after a short while I missed Osmond, and saw Julia walking arm in arm with Miss Edgcumb, Budenall and Frederick Montague with them. I enquired of my sister for her partner---“He left us a quarter of an hour ago,” she replied; “and said he would return immediately.”——I was alarmed; and, without divulging it, quitted them to go in quest of the Marquis. I traversed many apartments without discovering him---at length the sound of voices brought me to a room, wherein I found Suffolk, Osmond, Sir James Westbrook, and Jack Ainsley. Suffolk was making furious passes at our friend, who did little more than defend himself; and, before I had time to reach the spot where they fought, Suffolk, in the violence of his wrath, aiming to put a period to the life of his adversary, rushed on the sword of Osmond, which entered his right side.

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He fell, and called for Lord Pemberton. The noise of the rencontre reached the company, and in a minute the apartment was filled with gentlemen. Osmond's situation was distressing—he gave the Duke all possible assistance—he lamented Suffolk's rashness—and declared he was sorry for the provocation his Grace had obliged him to resent. The Duke received his condescending words as insults offered him, and entreated that his last moments might not be disturbed by the sight of an exulting happy rival, whom to his latest breath he must hate and envy. The Marquis assured him, that he injured his feelings in thinking him happy, when he beheld the situation his unfortunate hand had reduced him to; that he flattered himself with hopes of his recovery, and, though reluctantly, would leave his Grace till he judged more kindly of him—He retired—a surgeon appeared, and, whilst he was employed about Suffolk, I took Westbrook aside, and enquired of him the particulars of the affair—In the following words he gave them :

“ I overheard Suffolk say to Osmond, just as they were preparing to sit down to supper, “ I am no longer to be deceived, my Lord ; you are the man who seduces from me Lady Julia's affections—I expect you will meet me two hours hence in the Artois-room—I insist upon it!—I shall carry my sword thither—you must do the same—and give me the satisfaction I require—By Heaven and Earth I will no longer be a dupe !” The Marquis answered “ Your Grace is right—depend it shall be as you desire.” I went up to Osmond, and told him I had been attentive to the Duke's speech, and his reply—that it was incumbent upon me to make both known, and prevent their meeting. “ Dear Westbrook,” cried he, “ it is mere nonsense!—For the sake of your charming cousin, I will not fight him, if I can consistently with honour help it—But if the thing must happen, why not as well presently as at another time?—He is very arrogant—nay impertinent—and I should not be averse to the task of humbling him a little.—Yet I once more swear to you, that, as far as a man of courage can go, I will, to avoid it; and for this reason, that I know
what

what pangs a duel on her account will give this fair creature," looking at Julia. "She must not have an idea of the appointment he has just made—say not a syllable of it, I conjure you by our friendship." "Will you let me accompany you?" said I. "If Suffolk is insolent, by all that is good I will not ask you to withhold your arm!—Grant me but this." "Be it so!" he replied; "and I am the better pleased, because you will convince Julia, that nothing but strong necessity could urge the combat, if a combat does ensue." I left him, and, as soon as the Duke disappeared, he came and took me by the arm —

"Westbrook," cried he, "I am authorized to carry a friend with me; for Jack Ainsley has attended Suffolk out." The gentlemen were in the apartment of assignation when we entered.

"I am here my Lord Duke," said the Marquis, "to know your Grace's will?"

"It is already known to you, my Lord," returned Suffolk: "one of us must drop—our swords shall decide which."

"Mine shall not quit its scabbard, until I am informed why it should encounter yours," cried Osmond.

"Can you, my Lord," replied the Duke, "presume to carry dissimulation so far? Have you not dared, in a secret manner—in violation to all laws of honour—have you not dared to rob me of the heart of Lady Julia Herbert? To throw a veil over the eyes of her family—to screen yourself from my wrath, you have, with vile meanness, reported, that your hand is destined for another."

"You know but little of me, my Lord!—*To screen myself from your wrath!*—be assured, I hold it in contempt. Never was the heart of Osmond appalled by any being that wears a weapon—no, not even by the mighty Suffolk!"

"You are merry, Lord Osmond. Flushed with hope of calling her yours whom I have long loved, you judge it beneath you even to assume a gravity proper for this subject; but your gaiety will not last, trust me.

me. Confess directly—are you not the lover of Lady Julia?”

“I pray you how long is it since you have arrogated the privilege of enquiring into the state of my heart? Listen, my Lord—were I indifferent to Lady Julia, I should chuse to punish your turbulent curiosity by absolutely refusing to satisfy it; but, as I am not solicitous to blind her family, nor to screen myself from your *terrific* wrath, I will profess, with the utmost sincerity, to you and all the world, that I do love her beyond every-thing that is held most dear—I adored her before your Grace knew her; and shall continue to do so long—very long, after your acquaintance with her ceases.”

“Damnation!—dare you speak thus to Suffolk!”

“Indeed, I dare,—or to a more tremendous man—and yet have no *ague-fit*.”

“Another word before we engage, Lord Osmond—Have you not declared your attachment to her?—Does she not consent to reward it?” and he trembled with passion.

“Those questions might come properly from her brother: from your Grace they are unnecessary—nor will I resolve them.”

“Methinks, Lord Osmond,” said Jack Ainsley, “the least you can do, is to put out of suspense an unhappy lover.”

“I pity all unhappy lovers, Sir—perhaps I am one myself!—But I shall make no further responses to the Duke’s interrogations.”

“You need not, Osmond,” replied his Grace. “I am well convinced that Lady Julia has elected you the partner of her fate—but my arm shall prevent it.”

“Without fearing your wrath, my Lord, I will decline this combat—at least for the present. I owe Lord and Lady Mortimer too much respect to make their house the scene of broils and bloodshed—another time may settle the matter as well—I do not wish to plunge you into eternity.—Prithee live, and seek some kinder mistress!”

“And

"And do you add rallery to insolence? You have got the cant of priestcraft. It is not long, poor boy! since your father discarded the parson who set you sermons as lessons to get by heart—I suppose ye also chaunted psalms together as ye travelled. You have an excellent voice, and it ought never to be tuned to *profaner* notes.—Did he not often warn you to beware of the allurements of women? Pity you did not observe his admonitions on that head as strictly as you seem inclined to follow his doctrine in respect of fighting!"

"It is you, my Lord, who are now jocular; and 'faith I am glad of it. In spite of your sarcasm, I own that I am no friend to duelling; and certainly have imbibed so much morality as to believe that the reflection of being a murderer must be a terrible one."

"Oh! this is past jesting.—I did imagine that your astonishing composure sprang from something not right, and would at last dwindle into mere pusillanimity. By Heaven, the advice you gave shall be revenged!—Julia Herbert shall be metamorphosed into that kind mistress you bade me seek—Her disgust to you henceforward will work the change, and be the consequence of such palpable cowardice. I will exercise this weapon—not in pointing it at your breast—but in giving you the chastisement we inflict on those beneath us. Then shall *my* Julia be informed what a *valiant protector* she had erroneously made choice of,—thou deceitful, cowardly boy!"—A little before he ended his speech, the Marquis unsheathed his sword; and as the Duke was advancing to execute his cursed threat, he exclaimed,

"Dare not, for your soul, Suffolk, attempt it—or, by that Heaven you named, I will instantly lay you a corpse at my feet!"—The Duke, as it were, mechanically retreated a few paces back—There was an energy in Osmond's voice—a majesty in his deportment, sufficient to strike awe into the most intrepid bystander.

"Now, Westbrook," cried he, "I call on you to say, whether I have not, to the utmost of my power, evaded

evaded a rencontre? Were I, after this insolence, to with-hold my arm, I should merit the brutal disgrace he has dared even to menace Osmond with.—Still I wish not," turning to the Duke, "to take your life—Be more composed, or you lose all chance of ever again breathing an affront towards any man."—They engaged, and just as their duel approached the period, you entered."

I chide Westbrook for not having informed me of the appointment: he vindicated himself, and rejoiced most sincerely that the Marquis was not in the Duke's condition.

When Suffolk was put to bed, and all the company that was invited to this unlucky entertainment had departed (which happened very soon after the fray became public), we went to the Ladies—The first object that struck my eyes was Charlotte Pelham on her knees to Lady Mortimer. I approached my wife, and asked the cause. "I really know not," she answered, "why she should be in that position, unless she assumes it with a design to keep me from my mother, whom she is afraid I shall prevail on to be reconciled to the Marquis—But, if my suspicion injures her, she must be distracted; for she calls on me to implore Lord Osmond to pity, and not abandon her.—She it was who first gave intelligence of the duel—alarmed Julia in a cruel manner—and has by some means violently irritated my mother against her. Raise her, my Lord, and persuade her to disgrace her sex no further—I must give my attention to persons for whom I am nearly concerned." She passed on to the upper end of the room; and, when I had seated the mischievous girl, and given her to the care of some female domestics, I followed Caroline to the place where Lady Pemberton and the rest were assembled. I perceived that her Ladyship was violently agitated. The Duke of Northington sat near her, to whom she addressed her conversation in a low voice. Osmond was walking backwards and forwards the apartment with hasty steps—his arms folded—his countenance pale, and marked with despair and horror. Julia was seated in a remote cor-

ner of the room: Lady Caroline Denley's arms were thrown around her, and on her compassionate bosom rested the beautiful face of the afflicted creature, whilst Emily Edgcumb held one of her hands, which she bathed with tears. I approached Lady Pemberton, and begged to know why she should be so exceedingly affected at a catastrophe which Suffolk brought upon himself, and but too well merited? "What gives me most wretchedness at present, my Lord," cried she, "is finding that Julia, whom I always thought the most amiable of mortals, has thrown aside duty and discretion—she has, by giving clandestine encouragement to a man I will have no alliance with, rendered herself worthy only of contempt—she has caused him to imbrue his hands in the blood of the admirable Suffolk; an object beloved by her brother and me—the husband, she well knew, we had allotted for her."

"How injuriously does your Ladyship speak of her!—Ah, Madam, she is the very amiable being you always thought her!—On my soul, she was ignorant of the quarrel—Suffolk has been wholly to blame on the occasion—he behaved like a ruffian, and gave such provocation, as was inconsistent with a man of honour not to resent."

"Supposing she was ignorant that a fray would ensue between the Duke and her favourite Osmond, can you, my Lord, exculpate her for listening to the love he uttered without my sanction?—It is impossible!—Say no more—Julia has deceived me."—I left Caroline to plead her sister's cause with the angry mother, and went to Julia. I took the hand that Miss Edgcumb held; I besought her to look up—to speak to me; and said something of comfort.—She raised her head—"Ah, my brother!" cried she, "what comfort can you afford me? I have lost every prospect of it entirely!—my mother is offended—she will never pardon me!" "Then she must be the most unreasonable of women! Do not be uneasy; this silly affair will be of no consequence—you shall yet be happy with your Osmond." "Call him not mine—he is guilty—

guilty—he has sent an unprepared creature to answer at the tribunal of justice for crimes unthought of—Ah, my Lord, in how culpable a light has he been painted to me!” “Perdition seize the wretch who was so officious! For God’s sake, my dearest Julia, do not suppose him guilty—He was urged to the defence he made by the most illiberal language that ever tongue uttered—On your account he refrained from drawing, till his gallant spirit could bear no more insult with impunity—Suffolk yet lives; but, was it otherwise, the Marquis could not be arraigned, since the Duke, in aiming to put a period to the life of his rival, lost his own, though warned against the danger by his generous antagonist.—If you have any charity in your nature, any love for Osmond, I conjure you not to add to his distress by thinking unworthily of him!—At a leisure moment you shall hear the whole; in the mean while, take it upon my honour that he is innocent.”——“Ah, my poor Osmond!” she exclaimed, and again sunk upon Lady Caroline Denley’s bosom.—I went to the Marquis: “How is it, my best friend?” demanded I. He answered, “It is with me, as with a man plunging into hell, destitute of hope, and tasting the beginning torments of the damned—Oh! would to God I had received the fatal thrust in Suffolk’s stead!” “Exert your fortitude, my dear Osmond,” cried I; “make one effort. I will accompany you to Lady Pemberton—the storm of passion in her breast shall be appeased—we will assail her with prayers—The Duke of Northington’s influence must gain her to our party—he is fond of Julia, and will supplicate in her cause—She will consent, and yield my sister to your arms.”

“I have already tried to vindicate my conduct,” returned he; “she will not hear me—Julia has also cast me off, and now hates me for destroying the insolent fellow who urged the combat.”

“Ah, Osmond, pity the unhappy girl!—If she has shewn you displeasure, know that it was because some poisonous tongue accused you of being the sole aggressor. Julia is undeceived, and ready to be yours,

if Lady Pemberton acquiesces. To her you shall again pour forth entreaties—you have many advocates!”—He advanced towards her Ladyship, and throwing himself on one knee, grasped her hand—he entreated her to forgive him for what, if he had not acted, she must have despised him. He begged her to reflect on the misery that would attend her daughter in a union with one whom she was averse to. He described his passion for Julia in the liveliest colours, and began from its commencement—at the convent. He took upon himself the whole blame of her having concealed his declaration of it, and gave his reasons. He painted his father’s avaricious turn of mind, which would not be satisfied with less fortune than Lady Henrietta’s—his apprehension of Lady Pemberton’s contemning him as a match for Julia, when put in comparison with the more eligible Suffolk—yet he implored her to consider, that a hoard of treasure could not give relief to a wounded heart—and that Lady Julia, whose soul was sensible, and most truly delicate, would feel a load of misery under a load of jewels, in the idea of her wearing them at the expense of a man she hated. He said, a variety of superb dwellings—a number of splendid carriages,—and a throng of tinsell’d attendants, might gratify the ambition of a less refined woman than Lady Julia—but that he was enough acquainted with her excellence, to pronounce, that, though surrounded by the most gaudy pageantry, peace would be a stranger to her breast; and, he was well convinced, she would look forward with impatience to her gaining possession of that little space of earth, where her lovely form would lie at rest, till the last trumpet called it forth.—I cannot give you half the particulars of his discourse; but he spoke in so amiable, so touching a manner, that Lady Pemberton listened attentively, and viewed him with complacency. I thought the moment not unfavourable; and, flying towards Julia, I led her trembling to the spot where her lover suppliantly knelt—there we both assumed his attitude—Osmond caught her hand, and conjured Lady Pemberton to bestow it on him—Julia besought her forgiveness—and I entreated

treated her to make them both happy. Caroline was not an idle spectatress—Westbrook, Lady Caroline Denley, Emily Edgcumb, and even Budenall, joined their voices in my supplication. The Duke of Northington, contrary to my hopes, was silent; but I believe we should have succeeded, had not the incensed Pemberton entered at the instant. He came from Suffolk's apartment, full of resentment towards Julia—indignation and hatred towards Osmond. As he drew near, he exclaimed, "Your Ladyship is surrounded by petitioners—you must be pained—for what is more irksome than to be implored a favour that cannot possibly be granted? I will free you, at least, from one of them;" and he snatched up Julia in his arms. "Inhuman brother!" she cried, as he carried her off, "will you not let me obtain my mother's pardon?" "To-morrow you will have leisure enough for it," he answered. He desired his wife and Almeria to see her conveyed to her chamber. "Pemberton," said Osmond, "why is so much barbarity exercised on so gentle an object?—*Inhuman brother* indeed!" "If your Lordship chuses a *tilting-bout* with me also, you will find me much at your service—I am somewhat of a swordsman, though not near so expert a one as the Lord Osmond; yet fortune may for once be propitious, and render me more successful than Suffolk was—if not, I shall be contented to die in revenging the cause of my friend."

"My Lord," exclaimed the Marquis, "never will I raise my arm against Lady Julia's brother—so far from menacing, behold me an humble suppliant—to you, Lord Pemberton! am I a suppliant—Give your sister—the angel Julia—to one who considers the promotion of her happiness as his chief good—to a man whose whole life shall be employed in studying how to make her blessed—who will with?"—"No," replied the other; "by Heaven you shall not call her yours—at least with my consent. The silly girl would be equally averse to the union, did she but know that the scantiness of her fortune, after it had taken place, would cause her to be spurned at by the Duke of West-

morland. Your notions, I believe, are something more generous—still”——“I will interrupt you in turn, Pemberton,” cried I: “I have a proposal to offer, which must render all matters easy. It is no secret that you are tied down, and cannot make as ample provision for your sisters, as your wishes would prompt you to do—I am under no such tyrannic restriction—consent to her marriage with the Marquis, and, to satisfy his father, I will this instant bind myself to pay on the joyful day that sees them united, into Osmond’s hands, the ten thousand pounds I received with Caroline, and to that sum I will add ten thousand pounds.”——“It shall not stop there, my dear Mortimer,” said Westbrook: “in the same hour, Osmond shall have from me ten thousand pounds more. My cousin’s happiness is at stake, and we can well afford it. The Duke can then have no wish but for the connection—By all that is sacred, Pemberton, they must not be severed!”

Osmond clasped his hands—“My generous friends, what acknowledgments can I express, that will shew the gratitude of my heart!—Never were there greater proofs of regard!—But it must not be—I cannot consent to so kind a proposal.—If Lord Pemberton will do me the honour of bestowing his lovely sister on me, my father shall never approach her. My circumstances, independent of him, are certainly very circumscribed; yet I may safely aver, they will satisfy my Julia. Reflect a little, my Lord, and your objections may subside. Dear Lady Pemberton, what do you say?” She looked at her son, and, perceiving in his countenance aversion to the noble youth, answered, “I recommend to your Lordship to drop the affair—it is impossible for me ever to comply!”——“I have already pronounced my determination,” cried Pemberton; “and nothing shall make me alter it.”——“Oh, that my poor father was alive!” exclaimed Caroline. “And what if he was?” demanded her brother. “Why then he would more mildly use that authority as a parent, which you have arrogated to your-

yourself as a brother." He was highly displeased. "I see the consequences," cried Lady Pemberton, "that will happen from this girl's imprudence—my family, that has hitherto been one of harmony, will get into parties—nothing but dissensions shall I be witness of."

"When your Ladyship," replied Caroline, "centers your affection solely in your son, and, to please his unjust caprices, will devote your daughters to wretchedness, it must be so.—Great God be praised, that I got out of his power before this change, this monstrous change in his disposition happened!—How comes it, Pemberton?—You were once soft, and benevolent—has your wife used any arts proper for the end to set you at variance with your sisters?—Poor man! if so, I pity you." The Duke of Northington said something in vindication of his absent daughter, and was about to reprove her, when she interrupted him—"I entreat your Grace's pardon—but this is no time for lectures foreign to the present purpose—You have been very silent, my Lord, on the subject near our hearts. If you join not in our supplication, pray create no greater obstacles to our success!"—I never saw any one look more vexed and mortified than Pemberton did at the conclusion of the speech she addressed to him.—She turned to her mother, with a sweet enthusiasm fell at her feet, clasped her knees, and, raising up her eyes, exclaimed, "Dear Madam, be still our parent—suffer not that feeling, tender heart of yours to be warped by the example of others inhumanity—suffer it to plead in our behalf!—Make our amiable Julia blessed, and you will bestow felicity unspeakable on Almeria, my husband, Westbrook, and your Caroline—Think, my mother, how many will become unhappy, if the moody humour of your son is to be gratified!—My generous Mortimer, my kind cousin, have found an expedient that will remove all difficulties—As you wish not to behold my poor Julia an object of compassion, I conjure you to grant me the favour I ask!—Say that you do, and let me

run to rejoice her with the tidings!" "Rise, Lady Mortimer," she coldly replied: "I am not to be dictated to—Shall I reward the man who deprives of life a person whom I warmly regard; and that, the minute after he has committed the crime—even now when justice should be in pursuit of him—Assure yourself, I will not be so weak.—You have spoken too freely to me; I shall not readily pardon it." She arose and left the room. Caroline and Pemberton were warm in altercation, till Osmond begged he might no longer give rise to it. He desired Pemberton to look on him as his prisoner; the other refused it, and abruptly quitted him. The miserable Osmond threw himself on the floor, and seemed totally insensible to all around him. Lady Mortimer retired to Julia's apartment, to observe how she was situated, after promising me, that, if she was capable of it, she would prevail on her to write him a line of tenderness, and beg of him to avoid being taken by those who would endeavour to revenge on him the Duke's fate. I went to my wretched friend, whom Budenall and Montague were trying to awaken from the trance into which he had fallen. I assisted, but no arts we could use had any effect. At length, Lady Mortimer returned; and, as she approached him, he fixed his eyes on her with eagerness—called her his Julia,—and besought her to fly with him directly. She wept bitterly at the melancholy condition she saw him in—he perceived it, and exclaimed, "Is this proposal ever to be the cause of tears?—Ah, my dear love, you know their power!—I cannot bear to see you afflicted—Come, no more, my Julia!—we will look forward to brighter prospects. When Lady Pemberton and the Duke consent to reward our love, where shall we spend the first fortnight of our marriage?—My father will expect us to visit in Hampshire—you will prefer passing it at your mother's---you shall be gratified---Lady Pemberton must receive us---Or stay---suppose we settle it thus---Mortimer and Caroline will be anxious to have us with them till your house in—What still weeping, my dearest Julia!--Ah, how you make me suffer!" He paused for some minutes;

minutes; then suddenly starting on his elbow, again went on: "Faith we are thankful to Westbrook for this sweet opportunity—no, to Mortimer I believe—I know not which---my ideas are confused---Suffolk pushed hard to have my beloved in his chaise---How cursed fast the fellows drive! they will too soon put an end to the felicity I enjoy!--Nay, I will no more be reproved---one kiss---one dear kiss!--why do you chide me---this is prudery, sweet girl---Ah! they already stop, my Julia!--oh misery!" He grew outrageous, and uttered the most incoherent madness imaginable. Frederick Montague proposed that a surgeon should take some blood from his arm: with difficulty he breathed a vein, and, after the loss of many ounces, he came to himself. It was then strongly moved that he should directly leave Windsor, set out for one of the nearest ports, and from thence embark for France, where he should remain till the affair was in some measure hushed. He was totally averse to it---asked what business he had with life? and whether it would not be better that he should yield it up to the law, than to be expiring for years, harrassed with anguish excruciating, and beyond a martyr's suffering?" "How equal we are," cried I, "to any calamity, whilst we have no dread of its reaching us! Did I not, Osmond, hear you, a few hours ago, swear to Julia, that no misfortune should shake your constancy---that for her you would support life?" "You put a wrong construction on my words--I alluded to my attachment--To live divested of hope, of ever again beholding her, is above mortal ability." "Read there, my good friend," cried Lady Mortimer, presenting him with a billet, "and then judge if you are at liberty to destroy an existence on which another depends." The writing had more effect on him than would the pleading of an hundred tongues, though each was superior to a Cicero's. Westbrook, who had withdrawn to prepare himself, and to order a carriage, entered, and proposed that Lord Osmond should change his dress, and set out immediately—He hesitated—for the fifth or sixth time perused his billet—kissed it as often—whispered some-

thing to Caroline—and then, turning to us, said, he was ready to do whatever his excellent friends recommended. “Budenal,” cried he, “though my rival, you have compassion on my sufferings—you have long discovered my affection for Lady Julia—your disinterested, generous soul never laid one barrier in my way, or uttered a suspicion to any one—Let me presume to ask a continuance of your regard!” “If *you* forget, my Lord,” replied Budenall, “I never can, the obligation I am under to you—Mortimer, Montague, have you not often heard me declare, that to the Marquis I am indebted for preserving my life?—Was it not for him, I should one night at Florence have fallen a victim to two assassins, who, it afterwards appeared, mistook me for Lord Rainsford—I was nearly overpowered by them, when Osmond, chancing to pass that way, distinguished the voice of a person calling for help—He came to my rescue, desperately wounded one of the villains, and put the other to flight—yet this action he treats as of no consequence—he calls me disinterested—generous.—Ah, my God! could I do too much to make him happy!—Believe me, my dear Osmond, I ceased to be your competitor from the moment I perceived what bent your inclinations had taken—I esteemed, I admired your virtues from my earliest acquaintance with you—you alone I think deserving of the amiable woman we both prefer—and to you alone would I ever have resigned her, putting gratitude entirely out of the question. Look on me during life as your friend—a sympathizing one I shall ever be—Would it were in my power to prevail on Lady Julia to be the companion of your present flight!—but perhaps it is best that it should not be so—Keep up your spirits—be careful of yourself as you value her happiness—and rest assured, that you will yet be happy in the possession of her—If I can in any shape whatever be of use to you, do me the pleasure of commanding me.” Osmond embraced and thanked him; then retired to change his dress, and give some orders to Souville. Westbrook and Montague determined to accompany him. There was more of caution in our urging

ging Osmond's absence, than any absolute necessity there was for it. If Suffolk dies, and he stands his trial, he must, I think, on the oaths of Westbrook, Jack Ainsley, and myself, be acquitted—however, his departure from hence was a circumstance most proper in his situation.

As we with Lord Osmond were crossing the saloon to get to the carriage, Charlotte Pelham rushed in—fell at the Marquis's feet, and, encircling his knees with her arms, declared, if he left her, she would expire on the spot. He begged her to consider the impropriety of so condescending a behaviour—assured her that he would always think gratefully of the flattering distinction she honoured him with; and implored her not to render the obligations he owed her more painful to him than they already were, by persisting in a partiality that it was plain he was not deserving of.

“Ah, my Lord!” exclaimed she, “you little know to what lengths my ungovernable love has hurried me!—It was I—the slighted Charlotte Pelham, who plunged you into a sea of woe!—Osmond, can you pardon me?—It was I who inspired Suffolk with jealousy—who urged him to call you out!—Dear Osmond, be patient, whilst I add, that it was I who informed Lady Julia of the duel—that you fought it!—who almost killed her, and rejoiced at the prospect—I was the incendiary who exasperated Lady Pemberton with you both—I told her of clandestine meetings which you never had—I told her, that, to get rid of Suffolk's addresses, she incited you to rob him of life—that I overheard your conversation—and that after supper was the time fixed on—all this I mentioned when I informed her that you and Suffolk had fought!—My motive was revenge—revenge on you for your cruelty—on Lady Julia for depriving me of your heart.—But when you entered the room, and I beheld your grief, deep repentance filled my breast—The avowal I have made is a proof of it—Do not execrate me—however culpable, I have this excuse to offer, that my passion for you impelled me to undertake so
unwor-

unworthy a part.—You are about to fly—you hold me in contempt!—Dear Osmond, pity—and forgive me!”

He had often attempted to raise her, but in vain—I was fearful that his arm might bleed, and begged him to desist—He was overcome, and threw himself on Budenall’s shoulder—“ I pardon you, Madam,” he cried; “ but you must leave me.”

“ Osmond, can you be so inhuman!—Leave you!—Ah, my beloved Lord, you cannot pardon, and enjoin such a command at the same time!—Forgiveness appears not under the sentence—Let it come from your heart; and suffer me, dear Osmond,—suffer me to attend you in your flight!”

“ Death and confusion!—do I hear a-right!—You utter madness surely!” and he precipitately motioned toward the door. She followed, and again clasped his knees. I disengaged her hold, and, lifting her in my arms, was conveying her to the apartment of her mother, when meeting her sister, who was come in search of her, I recommended to her to prevent the girl from exposing herself in such a manner. Miss Pelham was in tears, and expressed infinite concern for all the disturbance Charlotte had occasioned—she strove to compose her, but no longer, robbed of her young, was ever more furious. I left her to give vent to her virulence, and was returning to my friend, when Lady Mortimer called to me from her dressing-room. “ Here, my Lord,” said she, “ give this to Lord Osmond—’tis a miniature of Julia---the resemblance is striking. Tell him that with it I present him my best wishes, but that I cannot undergo the pain of bidding him adieu.” I embraced her, praised her sensibility, and flew with the welcome gift to Osmond. I found him in the coach. I had just time to deliver my commission, and bade him farewell. He was unable to speak, and only grasped my hand; but I can easily imagine what passed in his breast. The excellent Miss Edgecumbe entreated Sir James not to leave him, till he had acquired fortitude enough to bear the calamities that surround him with moderation. He is accom-

accompanied by two worthy and feeling friends---may their attention and delicacy inspire him with comfort! You will, perhaps, be surprised at my telling you, that, in the hurry and confusion we were in to get the diabolical Charlotte away, I failed to enquire, and they to inform me, whither their rout was destined---but in a few hours hence I hope to receive an express from Westbrook.

When the carriage was out of sight, I repaired to the apartment of Julia---they had put her to bed. As I entered, I saw Mournies on her knees---her elbows rested on a chair---her hands supported her head---tears streamed fast down her cheeks. I spoke to her, and enquired for her Lady. "Ah, my Lord," cried she in French,---for she does not speak English fluently,---"the poor child is very ill!---ever since her sister persuaded her to write a few lines, she has neither wept, expressed a word, or taken notice of any thing." "Has she been worse *since*, than she was when she first entered her room?" "I really do not know---she did not seem so entirely stupified---she spoke a little wildly to young Lady Pemberton, and fainted two or three times---she appeared exceedingly disturbed at the sight of her---Once she called me, and whispered a fear, that she should say something wrong, which her brother would hear of, and begged me, if possible, to prevent her---I was sorely grieved---I advised the ladies to retire, and let her try to sleep. They went out; which my lady observing beckoned me to her---threw her arms round my neck---called me her good and faithful Mournies---then sighing said, she should not trouble me long!"---She got into such a fit of crying, as not to be capable of articulating another word. I advanced to the inside of the bed, and saw Caroline sitting by her pillow, and Miss Edgeumb at her feet. "Here is our dear Mortimer, my Julia," exclaimed Caroline; "pray speak to him." She opened her eyes, and stretched forth her hand-----

"Well, my brother, is he gone?"

"He is, my dear Julia; and, for your sake, will be careful of himself. He charged me with a thou-
sand

and tender things to you—to bless you for him, for that kind billet which brought him back to life and reason—and to tell you that he exists only on the hope of being yet yours.”

“He is gone, my Lord!—Ah, Osmond, thou art gone for ever!—never shall these eyes again behold you—never shall I listen to you more!—What a heart is mine that it does not break at the idea!—I thank heaven that you retain in your generous bosom the deceiver hope!—it will preserve you to those who know, and value your amazing worth—but from hence—you are lost to the miserable Julia!”

I endeavoured to console her—to prevail on her to banish such a thought. I begged her to be composed, and emulate the example of her lover, who considered it as unsuitable with his great soul to despair.

“I am composed, you see!—not one tear”——rubbing her cheeks alternately with her snowy hand——“not even a single tear falls as a tribute to this separation——Caroline sheds many—so does Emily——can they feel more for Osmond than his Julia!”

“For a few minutes she was silent; then, catching my hand with both of hers, exclaimed,——“But tell me, my brother—you are the only one I acknowledge——tell me, was it not cruel to force me away from him, before I could pronounce the heart-rending word Farewel?——Lord Mortimer! in such a situation as I was, I should have pitied the poorest creature——aye, though she had stained the honour of her family—I should have commiserated the pangs she endured——and have suffered her to say Farewel!”——Again she paused—and then proceeded——

“But, God be praised! my conduct has never been culpable. In loving Osmond, I loved the most amiable of mankind. If I was so publicly to be expelled the presence of all I held dear, why was not Caroline, or Emily, permitted to accompany me?——It would have been too merciful——I was committed prisoner to one, who would not fail to repeat to her
enraged

enraged husband the least unguarded expression that wretchedness might extort from my lips — Where is Mournies, My Lord?"

She appeared before her—an astonishing wildness became visible in Julia's eyes—she began to utter her words with quickness—and her breath grew short.

"I want to know, my dear Mournies," said she, "whether I expressed any thing faulty for which I shall be condemned by Lady Pemberton—by her son? —My head was giddy—but I meant no offence to any-one—I have no animosity in my breast, Heaven can tell. Answer, Mournies."

"Alas, my dearest young Lady! who can be offended with such sweetness?"

"Why every one can but Lord and Lady Mortimer—but he—whom I shall never see again!—Think you, my friend, that all are as partial to me as you are?"

"You said nothing, my excellent Lady, but what was gentle as is your own heart."

"That was well!—and now call Caroline to me."

"I am here, my dear Julia;—what would you say?"

"In truth I forgot—and all the little sense I have left, is just enough to know that you—my brother—and Emily, want rest—I pray ye all to seek it."

It was in vain to think of it, whilst it was to her a stranger.—I used every means to make her weep;—it was to no purpose; she was very feverish, and became absolutely delirious. Lady Mortimer and Miss Edgcomb never left her bed's side; nor did I, till a summons obliged me to quit her apartment. It was from Mrs. Pelham, who was about to leave Windsor, and who desired to see me, that she might apologize for the confusion her daughter had created. I did not behold Charlotte, and most ardently hope that my eyes may never be mortified with the sight of so cursed an object. I pity Miss Pelham, whose grief for what had happened was great. She is an amiable girl.

Emily Edgcomb just now informed me, that, as she and Julia were walking up and down the great room,

room, waiting for their partner's return, they heard a prodigious murmur, and saw a great bustle amongst the company. Perplexity and horror appeared in almost every countenance. Julia enquired the occasion, of the person she first met, who unluckily proved to be Charlotte Pelham.

"Good God!" cried she, "I am astonished that your Ladyship of all people should ask such a question." "Why so?" demanded Julia. "Because you cannot possibly be ignorant of the duel that has been fought on your account."

"*A duel—and on my account!*—For mercy-sake, dear Madam, let me comprehend you!"

"Your Ladyship," replied the malignant girl, "is certainly the first actress in the world!—you represent Nature to perfection—So I said when you played Sigismunda—Lord Osmond equals you in the same line—not a soul but could have sworn Tancred was the real distracted lover, in his own person, of Lady Julia Herbert—not a soul but could have sworn, that Sigismunda, divested of her borrowed character, was the fond maid she pretended—that she knew no attachment—that she breathed not a wish but for Lord Osmond."

"What means this untimely rallery?"—

"Now, who but myself, that "know the arts of wilful woman labouring for her purpose," could imagine this terror affected?—Who but myself would penetrate to the bottom of this well-acted curiosity? Who else could be convinced that you are too well acquainted with the horrid affair—that you have been the instrument of a fatal quarrel, which has deprived the most unparagon'd of his sex of life, and caused an amiable man either to fly his country, or to submit to a violent fate?"

"Who has done this?" cried the trembling Julia; "not I—ah, Madam, not I!"

"Your Ladyship is conscience stricken!—By your instigations Lord Osmond challenged the Duke of Suffolk—For the first time Lord Osmond committed a fault—but, circumstances weighed, it ought in a great measure

measure to be excused, and the blame be thrown on her in whom it originated—In a word (since you will have me repeat the affair,) the Marquis very brutally provoked the Duke to go out with him—they fought, and”——

She had not time to finish her barbarous sentence—Julia fainted—all flew to her relief, and in some minutes brought her back to life. When that was accomplished, Miss Edgcumb took notice that Charlotte fastened herself to Lady Pemberton’s ear, as Milton’s devil did to Eve’s, and it is evident with a no less mischievous intent. The amiable Julia, meaning to seek comfort from her mother, drew near to her; but, instead of it, she met the sharpest rebukes. She reproached her with dissimulation—imprudence;—bid her leave her, and never to expect that she should have any further confidence in her.—A second time she fainted—her mother beheld it without emotion—Lady Caroline Denley supplied the place of one—almost every female was busied in recovering and assisting her. They had scarcely effected it, when Lord Osmond entered—at the sight of him she hid her face in Lady Caroline’s bosom—“Ah, Madam,” whispered she, “he lives!—thank Heaven he lives!—But he is now a murderer—let me not behold him—ungrateful Osmond!—what reason had he to make himself thus unworthy of”——Lord Osmond came up to her: he took one of her hands, which she immediately withdrew—her eyes she kept averted from him. He spoke with tenderness inconceivable—she waved her hand, and desired him instantly to quit her. He begged only to be allowed to vindicate his conduct—the repeated her command: and he, with the utmost reluctance, was forced to obey. He then addressed Lady Pemberton, who would not hear him, as I before mentioned. In some time after Westbrook and I came in—you know the rest.

Every-one left Windfor this morning, excepting the Herbert family, Lady Caroline Denley, Miss Edgcumb, Suffolk, and Jack Ainsley.—The duke lives; but that is all—we have no hopes of him. H—s
and

and A——r, who were sent for, arrived about ten o'clock. On examining his wounds, they confirmed our fears respecting him.

Another victim the merciless grave seems to gape for—you will shudder when I name Julia Herbert to be the one. She is, in my opinion, dangerously ill. A most severe fever has attacked her; and she continues in the delirious way I mentioned, with this difference, that she has not a moment's interval of reason. Her mother, just now, hearing of the piteous condition she has been in all the day, consented to see her. The appearance of her must have brought remorse to her heart for the transactions of a few past hours. She spoke tenderly to Julia, who was at the time as ignorant of its being Lady Pemberton, as she would have been of a person she never beheld.

Her Ladyship reported to her son the melancholy situation she was in—this was his kind reply: "The mere artifice of a plotting girl to gain her point! Julia is wonderfully clever! God forbid she should be as ill as your Ladyship thinks her! Believe it on my word, she will shortly recover, if there is no notice taken of her delirium."

In this manner does he persist to judge of one superior to contrivance or finesse. Ere he awakens from his error, perhaps—but I will not anticipate the worst of evils! Should she die, some there are who would be justly punished in their own feelings for their barbarity—The lovely girl would be released from a load of misery, which, if she recovers, must be horrible to support—Osmond, I think, can never be hers; and I am satisfied, death, in all its terrific forms, they would each prefer to such a certainty. Those most to be compassionate are the persons whom now her excellence—who endeavoured to make her happy—and who will, in a sudden manner almost, weep over her corpse.—I am uneasy about Caroline, whose condition renders her a very improper object to undergo such acute distress as she is liable to experience.

No tidings have yet arrived from Westbrook. With the hope of giving you further information of our friend

friend, I have kept my letter open to the last moment—it is now nine o'clock. There is some consolation in the thought of Osmond's being ignorant of the dreadful way his Julia is in—a miserable pair they are indeed!—I know not how the Duke will behave on hearing the particulars of his son's conduct. You had best, dear Montague, take upon yourself the disagreeable task of imparting to him what you think requisite of the late proceeding. You are well acquainted with his Grace; and no one is so well qualified for such an office. I shall be glad to receive a line from you to say in what manner he bears it.—To-morrow I will write again.—I am, with much sincerity,

Your affectionate friend,

MORTIMER.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windſor, Thursday Evening.

AN expreſs has brought me a letter from Weſtbrook, which I ſhall encloſe, as you will beſt judge of the ſituation of Lord Oſmond. H——s and A——r find no change in Suffolk; but, from his holding out ſo much longer than they expected, they begin to have a glimmering of hope that he may recover. From appearances I ſhould ſuppoſe it impoſſible. He is in ſkilful hands; and, if it is in nature to ſave him, the two gentlemen I have named will effect it.

Laſt night, after I had diſpatched George with my packet, I joined Lady Caroline Denley, Lord Pemberton, his mother, and wife. I found Lady Caroline reaſoning with him on the abſurdity of his notion concerning Julia—He obſtinately maintained the opinion he had before expreſſed, that her illneſs was all a feint to excite pity, and cauſe the Marquis to be recalled. Lady Caroline told him it was incumbent on him to prove

prove the strength of his suspicion, by visiting her apartment—A valuable life would probably be lost for want of care; and then to allege that he thought her disorder affected, would be a mean excuse indeed! I adored her for the generous warmth with which she spoke: Pemberton consented to follow her advice; and we accompanied him to Julia's chamber—He advanced towards the bed, and, seating himself on it, thus addressed her:

"Come, my dear Julia—allow me now to beg, that you will exert your good sense, and consider the impropriety of giving way to such unavailing grief—Your mother no longer remembers the foible she reproached you for—I come to solicit your pardon for my hastiness—you will forgive me, I am sure, dear Julia."

"Who calls?" cried she; "Sir James!—You gave my letter to Louisa—she must tell Sir Charles with caution that his friend is murdered—he cannot bear it as I do!—Oh! my cousin, why did you not stop Suffolk's inhuman hand?"—

Pemberton touched her arm: "My God!" exclaimed he, "how she burns!—She has a violent fever"—"Not at all," cried Caroline,—"*'tis all artifice*—leave her to herself, and her sufferings both of mind and body will soon be over!" She burst into tears—"I too justly deserve that retort, Lady Mortimer," he replied; "I behaved unkindly—but do not add to my mortification."—He again spoke to Julia; she paid him no attention, but continued to wander in the same strain.

"A troop of celestial spirits, robed in white garments, surround him—hyacinths, violets, and roses in their hands---they compose a wreath of orange-flowers-- they crown him with it---Osmond! tho' in heaven, forget me not---Ah, my Lord, you look on me with contempt!---you abandon me for ever---you know I always hated Suffolk—Oh, Osmond!---I cannot bear it."---For a few minutes she was silent---but every feature gave evidence that her heart laboured under a mighty conflict---at length, she exclaimed,

I have

"I have discovered the place on earth which contains my Osmond---I have found him---Oh torment!---distraction to my senses---I have found him---but found him the husband of Charlotte Pelham!---Was it your choice, my Lord?---You need not---I know your love---your constancy too well!--it was the Duke of Westmorland obliged you to it---We shall never meet again---Dear Osmond! farewell---farewel for ever!-----Hark! what divine sounds strike my ear!---again---it grows more ravishingly sweet---my new friends are trying to sooth my anguish--ah, what goodness!--Are the sorrows of a poor insignificant girl worthy of being thought on by the great God of worlds!--Does he deign to make his Elect tune their cymbals--and warble forth melodious notes, to comfort the heart of Julia Herbert!--I will not lose a sound---Poor Osmond!---but hush!"

She seemed to listen for some time---and then returned to her former rambling method of speaking. Pemberton's breast was sorely penetrated---He immediately sent a courier for Doctor W---, whose assistance I should have demanded earlier, but that Lord Pemberton, when I proposed it to him, besought me not to aid the girl's farce so egregiously. I did not chuse to be thought officious, and left him to do as he pleased.

When W. arrived, which was not till six o'clock this morning, he found his patient in a deplorable way---He addressed her with that gentleness for which he is famed---he begged her to inform him where her pain lay?

"Once I was sick," she answered---"I fainted---There is a person---would you think it, Lord Budenall?---there is a person who delights in surprising---in disturbing my wretched head---But you are not Lord Budenall---nor Sir James---nor are you that hateful creature the Duke of Suffolk---who are you pray?---a friend of Suffolk's?---I beg you to retire---your appearance afflicts me."

He

He assured her he was a stranger to the Duke—and one interested in her recovery, which he hoped she would permit him to facilitate.

“I believe,” cried she, “that you are no friend of Suffolk’s—you look humane——draw near then, and let me tell you——There is a person who torments me to death—once he made me faint at Ranelagh—when I recovered, I saw at my feet a man that resembled——well, no matter!—he, Sir, was gentle and kind—aye, he loved the poor Julia, till the cruel creature I told you of murdered him—and now I shall never see him more!”

Doctor W. strove to console her——she interrupted him.

“He stabbed him, Sir—I threw myself between them——his sword went through my heart, and pierced my beloved Henry’s——Ah, look there!——do you not behold the gaping wounds?——I hear his shriek—again I hear him shriek!—not that he is murdered—but that his Julia is now left defenceless!”

She sunk upon her pillow, with clasped hands—the person to whom she spoke was much affected. In a few seconds she started up again.

“An angel now at my elbow bids me claim your promise—dear Sir, you seem very good—be the friend of my Henry!—snatch the weapon yet reeking with his blood, and plant it in my breast—dispatch I pray you—I want to be with my Lord—Suffolk only tortured me—Heaven must reward you for so benevolent an action—you will save me from a dreadful marriage—you will be the means of uniting me in a better world to him whom my soul loves.”—“I hope to be the means of uniting you here, dear Lady, to your Henry—Do not terrify yourself with these horrible imaginations—He, whom you lament as dead, lives to bless you—Dear Lady Julia, make him not suffer, for a real calamity, those pangs that rend your bosom for a fancied affliction—Think, if you die, what must be the fate of your Henry?”

“And do you say, Sir, that he lives?—Ah, now I discover the artifice—He lives!—Impossible! Did I

not

not see him expire?—Dear Osmond! I will not be deceived—nay, do not doubt my tenderness!—They shall never persuade me to marry Suffolk. You, my dear Lord, first taught my heart to love—you are the only one whom it shall ever love—The mask of humanity you have assumed, Sir, is seen through—you are leagued against me—begone and trouble me no more!”

She turned from him, and he, unwilling to agitate her further, retired from the bed. Doctor W. pronounces her in a most alarming situation, and fears that no medicine can reach her disease—The continual terror she is in—the immense exertion of her spirits—and the rhapsodies of madness she utters, must exhaust her greatly. The violence of her fever is not to be imagined.

Miss Edgcumb taps at my door—Dr. W. declares that bleeding her must no longer be deferred—all day he has been anxious to have the operation performed; but it could not be effected from the restlessness of her positions—I am apprehensive they will find it impossible—My presence is desired.

* * * * *

Eight o'Clock.

I am just returned from Julia's apartment—Mr. A. was preparing the apparatus for bleeding when I entered. Lady Pemberton was inducing her to submit to the necessity of it; she understood her not. Caroline was trying to make her sensible how requisite the operation was. Pemberton stood looking on with folded arms—a mixture of fear and grief sat on his countenance—His wife and Almeria were in tears at the bottom of the room. Doctor W. was imparting his apprehension of his patient, I believe, to Lady Caroline Denley; for she wept exceedingly at what he said: and Emily Edgcumb was exerting her powers to console Mournies, whose sobs at length obliged her to quit the apartment.—Good God, what a melancholy

ly assemblage of people did it contain!—Doctor W. and Mr. A. approached the bedside.

“Come, my dear Julia!” cried Lady Pemberton, “I will remove your sleeve”—and she held her arm, which Mr. A. took. Julia struggled to disengage it.

“For mercy’s sake, Madam,” said she, addressing her mother,—“for the sake of that God, who disclaims all violence, do not oblige me to this horrible marriage.—You cannot wish, Sir,” turning to Mr. A. “to join two people who must be miserable.—Oh, Osmond!—my dear Osmond!—why did I not hearken to what you advised?—I am lost—for see! Lord Pemberton—the tyrannic disposer of my fate—comes to pronounce curses on my head—my mother follows his example, if I dare to refuse Suffolk—Suffolk who has already been the destroyer of my peace.—God of compassion!—will you look on, and see your creature forced to become a perjurer!—heart-breaking torture—Behold where Osmond stands!—his eyes reproach me for my falsehood—he turns from me—fly not, I beseech you—the vows I made you are impressed with indelible characters on my soul—never will I swerve from them—doubt not my firmness!—Unhand me, thou most inhuman of men!—Now, Suffolk!—now I despise you!”

She wrenched her hand from Mr. A.—You can easily imagine the feelings of those around her. “It is in vain,” said Lady Pemberton, “to urge it further!—My child must die—and under a belief that her nearest connections are barbarians.” Her sorrow was insupportable—Pemberton screened himself from Julia’s sight—I went to the bed, and, seating myself behind her pillow, raised her in my arms. “Julia,” cried I, “my dearest sister!—do you not know me?” “By that soothing appellation,” she replied, “I am sure I do,—you are Lord Mortimer.”

“Yes, my much-loved girl—your brother—your friend, and our Osmond’s—You are not well, and I come to beg of you to let that gentleman, Mr. A. draw a little blood from your arm—The operation is not painful—You will oblige me, dear Julia?—

Was

Was Osmond here, he would request it ; and, surely, you could not refuse him ! Reflect how much his life depends upon your safety." She smiled, and shook her head. " Ah, dear delusion !—But do what you please." I kissed her cheek : " Sweet girl ! what an obligation you confer on me !" Mr. A. again took her hand.

" Surely, my Lord," said she with eagerness, " he will not unite me to the Duke !—Remember—remember your honour is concerned as well as mine, that he should not." I quieted her fears—He bled her till she fainted—she lay five minutes without the least motion or respiration. By Doctor W.'s desire, a cordial was poured thro' her lips, which instantly revived her ; and, when I left her, she seemed a little more composed. Adieu, dear Montague. I am,

Your most devoted friend,

MORTIMER.

To Lord MORTIMER (enclosed).

Sittingbourne.

WE have travelled as expeditiously as possible to this place, which we reached an hour ago. The portrait that you, my good Lord, gave our distressed Osmond, was a comfort to him unspeakable. He would hold it in his hand—fix his eyes upon it—many obtrusive tears would roll down his pale cheeks. He would press it to his lips ; then lodge it for a few minutes in his bosom—quickly it would be recalled, and the same pleasing melancholy scene pass over again. Thus was he supported, till we drew near our present quarters, when, I believe, the idea of leaving Julia so far behind occurred, and tortured his soul. There is no describing to what a height his agonies arose during the last ten miles that we travelled. When we stopped

ped for a relay, I proposed to him to quit the carriage, and seek repose for a couple of hours. Frederick seconded me. He was glad of any pretence to protract his stay in England, and consented. We accompanied him to an apartment for the purpose; and, whilst Souville was giving him some attendance, he expressed a fear that this delay might be of bad consequence to his Lord. Osmond rebuked him for his timidity, and ascribed the poor devil's impatience wholly to selfishness.

"A desire," cried he, "of visiting the dirty city where you first breathed, renders you unmindful of every consideration else, and that what you think elysium is to others hell"—Souville begged the Marquis's pardon for having offended him; and declared he preferred being with him, even in a prison, to living with all possible affluence in the capital his Lordship thought him so greatly attached to, severed from his service. Osmond was too much engaged with his own melancholy ideas to listen to what he said; and several times did a proposal to return hover on his lips—Once he exclaimed.

"It is not credible that my father should be void of tenderness—Undoubtedly, were he to see me, he would compassionate the anguish I endure."

Frederick entreated him not to tantalize himself with such a notion. "You know, my dear Osmond," said he "better than any man, the temper of the Duke. Reflect only a minute, and you must certain, that you have no ground for one flattering hope respecting him at present. His resentment is now strong against you. Were you to appear, it would break through all bounds. Wait then with patience till it spends itself—till the ties of Nature operate in your behalf. A few weeks—but a few weeks!—and all will be well."

Osmond clasped his hands, and, like one in despair, fell on the bed. Souville drew the curtains round him, placed himself within hearing of his Lord—and we left the room, hoping, that, when he found it quiet, sleep

sleep might steal on his weary eye-lids. I trust he will be enabled by it to proceed on his rout presently.

We are anxious to know the situation of poor Julia, yet cannot expect it on this side of the water. Be so good as to write to me, and direct at the common place—Monsieur Dessen's at Calais, where we will remain till I get a letter from you.—Suppose your Lordship was to prevail on Julia to enclose a few lines to Osmond? She ought to know the consolation it would afford him.—I am afraid Lady Mortimer has suffered from the late disagreeable scenes she was in—ill calculated, indeed, for one in her condition!

I will not speak of the Pemberton's further than to say, that they have hearts of adamant—As for Suffolk, if no one wishes more for his recovery than I do—he has not a friend upon earth.

Ah, Mortimer! had I been Osmond, I would have taken glorious revenge on that devil incarnate Charlotte Pelham—I would have gratified her inclination certainly!—She might have accompanied me as far as Dover; but there she should receive my *congé*, and be left to make the best of her way up to London, or wherever she pleased, whilst I pursued my voyage with the exulting idea of having prevented her admission in future to the circles of women of character.

I must send a short letter to my generous Emily, and that to thank her for the friendly offices she permits me to administer to the unfortunate Osmond.

Frederick joins me in *baïsemains* to Lady Mortimer. I am, my Lord, with much warmth, your Lordship's

Most faithful

And affectionate

JAMES WESTBROOK.

To Lord MORTIMER.

St. James's-Square, Thursday Afternoon.

YOU, my Lord, who are acquainted with my attachment to the most excellent of men, can readily judge of the distress I experienced on reading your Lordship's packet. Had I known where to have found Osmond, I should, my Lord, on the receipt of your first letter, have flown to him, and offered all the assistance in my power to support him under the affliction with which he is oppressed—But I am satisfied in the reflection of his having two companions, who, possessing hearts at ease, can better supply comfort to his sorrows, than the unfortunate man that now addresses your Lordship.

I went this morning to Grosvenor-square. I am at a loss to say, whether the Duke of Westmorland was a stranger to the melancholy proceedings that happened last Wednesday, (for he arrived late last night from Peterborough,) or whether, being informed of the matter, he delighted in the notion of having got rid of a young man whom he never loved; but certain it is, he wore, on my entrance, an uncommonly cheerful aspect, and his eyes displayed a vivacity that is generally the result of having heard agreeable tidings. As soon as I could obtain an opportunity by his silence, I began the business your Lordship commissioned me to treat on. I first imparted to him the passion that his son felt for Lady Julia Herbert, and described it with all the *pathetic* I was master of—His face grew red—his lip quivered—anger disturbed the whole æconomy of his frame.—I next mentioned the duel; and related, in your own words, my Lord, what passed between Suffolk and Osmond on the occasion. When I ended, he paused for a minute or two; then exclaimed, "Give me leave, Sir, to tell you, that I should
not

not be sorry, if your obstinate friend had paid with his life the forfeiture of his obedience."

"Good God, my Lord, is it possible! His destiny would indeed have been hard, if the insolence of his antagonist had gone unpunished!—Heaven was too just, and chastised the man who deserved it. No one can pity Suffolk, that hears the story. He was meanly jealous of Lord Osmond's superior virtues—his superior qualities. He knew the impression they must make on Lady Julia's heart—he sought the life of his rival—and, forgetting the consequence—the innate worth of the person, who was to be his adversary, dared to let fall threats which the Marquis could not away with—He drew; but, wishing no harm to Suffolk, stood merely on his defence. The Duke's want of skill—his violence—or some cause that originated in himself, solely robbed him of life—not Lord Osmond—And yet"——

"Say no more, Sir, I beg. It would be very extraordinary, if you did not represent the matter in the light most favourable to your friend. But, I am thoroughly acquainted with the turbulence of his disposition—with his hot-headed rashness. He had no right to endeavour to alienate the affections of the girl whom Suffolk meant to make his wife. The quarrel, I am satisfied, was of his seeking. Would to God he had fallen, and never plagued me further!"—"Merciful Heaven, how cruel! So amiable a youth to be thus calumniated! He who declined, as far as honour would permit him, the combat, to be called the aggressor!—to be wished dead by the man who gave him existence!—Unguardedly you dropped the expression, my Lord—prithce recal it, and I will for ever blot it from my memory!"

"Retain it there, Sir, if you please, till you impart it to Lord Osmond; and let this message be its companion, that, as soon as he chuses, he is at liberty to set out for America, for France, Holland, the East-Indies—in short, what place he thinks best. Assure him that I shall write no more submissive notes; send my servants no more to sit up at his house, till he re-

turns from the habitation of witchcraft which he frequents, where he momentarily curses my tedious lingering in a world that wants me not—they shall no more, I say, Sir, spend the night at his *hotel*, looking with impatience for the young *hero's* return, to supplicate in my name his forgiveness—I will never again behold him!”

“Let me intreat your Grace to think a little before so harsh a sentence is pronounced on him!—If it does appear in your eyes that Lord Osmond is to blame, attribute his fault to the levity natural to a young man, and pardon it.”

“No, Sir, I will never pardon him. He knew how greatly I disapproved of an alliance with the Herbert family—I cautioned him against the subtle poison that lurked beneath the beauty of those artful girls—I bid him beware of the snares they would lay to catch his amorous heart—In open rebellion to my will, he attached himself more than ever to them. I informed him of the engagement I was under to Davenport, that a marriage should take place between him and Lady Henrietta—I solicited him to gratify my wishes——He absolutely refused to do so; and spurned at the provision my tender care had made for him. He left me in wrath, vowing never to enter my doors again. That threat subdued my pride, and I was all the father—I threw aside my resentment, and pleaded for a reconciliation. He then flew to Lady Pemberton’s—paid his addresses to the girl he was thoroughly convinced I liked not—fought a duel on her account—wounded dangerously a person of consequence to the Kingdom, who is no doubt by this time dead—and has the presumption to expect, that I will hush the affair, supplicate the hand of his beggarly mistress for him, give them up my estates, retire to some obscure corner of the globe, and there spin out the remainder of my days on roots, or bread and water—fit food for so despicable an object!—But Lord Osmond is mistaken in me—I cannot be reproached by mankind for abandoning him to the severest turns of fortune, after the recent instance he has given of his libertinism.

libertinism. My friends must certainly applaud me, for avoiding any measure that would continue in my country so dangerous a member to society."

"Ah, my Lord! I now see, that, but for a fear of the censures of the world, he would have been abandoned long ago by your Grace."

He looked confused, and was about to speak, but faltered—

"Depend upon it, my Lord, that the unhappy rencontre will not clear you of the imputation of having acted with brutal inhumanity towards your son, when this matter is talked over, even by the enemy of Lord Osmond—if such a one exists—His conduct cannot be condemned—the unnatural father must be execrated—Osmond's worth will be set in contrast—how unfavourable the comparison to you, my Lord!—Ah, to be looked contemptibly on by the world, requires more humility to support, than, I am persuaded, either your Grace or I could attain on such an occasion!"

"You are in an error as to my sentiments, Sir—nor is it worth my while to explain them to you.—Had your friend consented to marry Lady Henrietta Marchmont—had he shewn a willingness to oblige me in that affair—he might have found that no father could have regarded a son more tenderly."

"So, my Lord, if he had rendered himself the most wretched of mortals, you would have struggled with your nature, and tried to have esteemed him!—He would have been adequately recompensed, no doubt!—But, in the name of Heaven, how could your Grace ever have thought of connecting so elegant a fellow with so miserable a creature?—I declare to you, my Lord, I should despise my valet, were he even to entertain an idea of possessing her money, at the woeful expense of also possessing her person. Was Lady Henrietta to offer him her hand, if he did not refuse it, I should think him bestial."

"I suppose, Sir, you have often told my son the same?"

"Not I, my Lord!—This, indeed, I have told him, that *I held it impossible for your Grace to intend seriously so preposterous a union*: and it must be confessed, that no one in their senses could have a notion of making the charming, accomplished Osmond, husband to a being scarcely human.—But we have wandered far from the purpose. For God's sake, my Lord Duke, know the value of your son! Consider the blessing you own in him. Put it not in the power of futurity to compel you to curse your present barbarity. No longer be inflexible, I conjure you; but act as a parent ought, and promote his happiness!"

"Ah, Sir Charles, your device is a bad one. I am not to learn that Lord Osmond has sent you on this errand. You have promised to be his panegyrist—to bestow praises on a worthless subject.—That failing, I am by *predictions* to be terrified into compliance."

"I swear to you, my Lord, I have neither seen, nor received a line from the Marquis since this unlucky circumstance happened, on which you build your anger. I am absolutely ignorant where he is; but be it where it will, that spot contains the most unhappy mortal that exists!"

"He deserves to be so; and if the displeasure of a parent can add to his misery, pray hasten to inform him, that he has mine in its fullest extent; that I will not interfere in his behalf, though I see him led to execution; that from hence I will not supply him with a single farthing; and, that he may not tire Heaven with prayers for my death, in the hope of profiting by it, it is my firm resolve to cut him off from ever possessing a shiver of my fortune—in short, that I wish never to hear more of him, and from this hour I will forget that I have a son."

"Well, my Lord, I must acknowledge that you are a singular father in truth! Believe me, *you* are not the person whom Lord Osmond would solicit benefits from: though his life was at stake, he could not expect that you would use the least trouble to preserve it, so thoroughly sensible is he of your *paternal tenderness*.

ness. But I have the comfort of knowing, what probably will afflict your Grace, that it is not in any sort of danger, as, from the testimony of some respectable men of quality, it will appear plain, that he was in no manner culpable.—A few words more, my Lord—If your Grace chuses to withhold from him your wealth, why it must be so; there is not a syllable to be said—however, you will please to recollect that he has a provision in your hands, which you”—

“What do you mean, Sir?”

“Only this, my Lord—that we are not as ignorant, as you would have us, of Lady Anne Skefley’s generosity. Your Grace must give up the estate immediately, and prepare to reimburse the arrears, or we will take such measures as shall oblige you to it, and in every respect mark you to the world for the extraordinary *just* and *benevolent* father that you are.—I have the honour to wish your Grace a good morning.”

There is no describing how pale he turned at the mention of Lady Anne—he was shocked, and looked as much confounded as men in general do, when detected in a mean action.—Your Lordship knows but little of Westmorland; allow me to give you a sketch of his character, which is so totally opposite to our friend’s, that, was not the late Duchess spoken of as a model of perfection, I should suspect her of having played the Duke false, and made a worthier man the father of Osmond.

Westmorland is outrageous in his passions; avaricious, and yet beyond conception fond of splendor and parade. To this may be ascribed the liberal education he gave his son—the expensive way in which he permitted him to live. It was his ambition to have it said, “What a magnificent man is the Duke! Not a nobleman in the world understands so well how to spend money properly. Observe the generous manner he supports Lord Osmond in—Oh, he has the spirit of an Emperor!—Such phrases gratified his low vanity; and, to gain them, he even parted with a quantity of the metal he adored. Now is he rejoiced to

the soul, at finding a plea to escape censure, and withhold from the Marquis his darling gold. Never did one spark of natural affection for those allied to him enter his breast—he is selfish beyond description—yet so artful and designing, that he can pretend to feel most sensibly, if it suits his purpose or interest to do so. What an example of it had our unhappy Osmond in that affair he told your Lordship of, when on the verge of leaving England, rendered desperate by his father's inhumanity! The Duke reflected, that, when the cause of his son's emigration was known—the horrible language he used to him made public—he would be held in the despicable light that so infamous a behaviour deserved, by every creature. He judged it most to his advantage to make up the breach; and, in effecting it, displayed a master-piece of hypocrisy, feigning the utmost concern for what had passed, and promising an amendment of conduct that he never designed to fulfil. His unguarded expression to me this morning, plainly discovered the spring which actuated his brutal heart. *A fear of the world's opinion* will yet befriend the Marquis, I trust. I have hopes that the spirited way I addressed him in, just before I left him, will intimidate, and cause him to be less rigorous than he threatened towards Osmond. If not, he is past feelings of every kind; and the unfortunate youth must content himself with the little he possesses in his own right.

I shall suffer the Duke to think quietly on what I said for a day or two. If in that time I do not hear from him, I shall desire another interview.

I am well assured that Osmond will receive no disappointment from the Duke's determination. He has experienced so many hardships from his *sarouche* temper, that this instance of his hatred cannot appear extraordinary; though it is but lately that the Marquis has ever uttered a complaint of him even to me. I have been long acquainted with Westmorland, and am well skilled in all the movements of his heart. Circumstanced as I am, I should not remain another hour in this city, but for the hope of serving Osmond with

with his father, for whose sake I endure with wonderful patience the torture of mixing in society that I cannot avoid here.

It is impossible to paint the emotions of my soul at your Lordship's account of the beautiful Lady Julia. May Heaven restore her! In that ejaculation I include the happiness of Osmond. If she dies — but, indeed, the moment in which he hears it, will be his last.

And now, my dear Mortimer, permit me to inform you, that Louisa Sydney and I can never be united. — You will despise me when you know the cause; and yet what man ever stood more in need of pity! — My fortune is ruined by my own folly; and I love her too ardently, to ally her fate to a wretch's, who has been the author of his own woes. — Spare me further on the subject — I cannot bear it! Still I must beg that the packet I now return you, which contains the dreadful recital, may remain in your custody a while. When you think Lord Osmond enough composed to read it, then dispatch it to him wherever he is. He has at this time no occasion for my presence: the amiable Westbrook and Frederick will not leave him till his mind has acquired a sufficient serenity. Perhaps he might accompany them to England — at best, my griefs can but add to his — and I would spare him the daily sight of an object, who from hence must be a spectacle of misery.

Before I leave London, I will write again to acquaint your Lordship, whether the Duke forgives his son, and consents to his addressing Lady Julia, or not. Both, or neither, is my condition. I wait with the most eager impatience for the letter you were so obliging as to promise me this day. I trust in Heaven that it will give me a better account of the lovely Julia. God forbid you should have any cause to suffer in regard of Lady Mortimer's anxiety about her friends! — I am, my Lord, with the highest esteem,

Your Lordship's

Most devoted servant,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

To

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor, Friday.

YOUR letter, my dear Sir Charles, at once surprized and distressed me.—What new scene of horrid wonder are we yet to experience!—I can scarce give credit to your assertion—“Louisa Sydney and I can never be united!”—Astonishing indeed!

You are to blame, my good friend, in yielding yourself a voluntary prey to despair, when it might so easily be in the power of another to render you still happy. I would not for the universe wound your delicacy; but give me leave to say, that I have never valued the fortune I possess, only as it enabled me to be a minister of peace to worthy bosoms. Methinks, were I reduced by any calamitous stroke, or straightened in my circumstances, I should feel a sort of satisfaction in the thought of affording a friend, whose attachment I could not doubt, the felicity of assisting me—Let me beg the favour of you to confer such an obligation on me. A long minority enabled my guardians to hoard up a quantity of treasure, which I have had no occasion to encroach upon, and which is at present useless to me. Any part, or the whole of it, is at your service for what length of time you please. Your two estates are fine ones; and, in the course of some years, might, without your feeling the least inconveniency, re-imburse a very large moiety—but that, I give you my honour, I should never consider, if it was not with an idea of its making you less reluctant to employ me in the manner I wish. The pleasure of extricating a friend shall be my interest for the loan of the money; and your note, payable many years hence, my security.

Do not, my dear Montague, bestow on me the mortification of thinking that you suppose me too presuming or officious; which I must do, if you refuse to oblige me. Should that be the case, I could more easily

easily forgive your pride, was *your* happiness alone at stake—But when you reflect on the dagger this terrible infraction must strike to the breast of Louisa Sydney, you will be convinced that honour leaves you without an option. Dear Sir Charles, afford me the luxury of making one amiable couple happy. I shall be much hurt, if you suffer any other to anticipate me in the pleasure of doing you a service. An answer I shall impatiently wait for: however, as I cannot doubt your regard, I will send, by the fellow who carries this, orders to Mr. ——— to have my stock in readiness against I demand it.

Lady Julia is still in danger, though Dr. W. has more hopes of her than he had. About two hours ago she was sensible, and entreated her mother to pardon the faults she had committed. ‘Yet,’ added she, ‘if to love Lord Osmond is one, I cannot renounce it—He is amiable—tenderly attached to me—I could not command my heart—it owned him for its lord—and can never know another—But, if he is hateful to you, Madam, I will not marry him—Let me depend on your urging me no further to become Suffolk’s!’

She got into a violent flood of tears, which were the first she had shed since three o’clock on Wednesday morning. Some time after she complained of her head, and suddenly fell asleep—That refreshment of Nature has been a stranger to her during her illness, her fever not having permitted its approach for one single minute. Doctor W. was greatly delighted; his assiduity has been unwearied. Pemberton’s joy was visible. Lady Pemberton’s tears again flowed; but from a happy cause. When Julia awoke, her delirium returned; yet, upon the whole, she seems more composed.—Lady Pemberton and my wife are entirely reconciled.

Would to God I knew in what situation poor Osmond is! Westbrook’s letter makes me very uneasy about him. Sometimes I wish that he had returned to London——nothing less than an honourable acquittal

quittal can be the consequence of his trial—Yet I think his absence from a kingdom where he has undergone so much, the best measure of restoring him to tranquillity; especially as he would not be allowed to see Julia, did he remain in it. I am convinced that she will not marry him without Lady Pemberton's approbation, and that can never be obtained; for, ill as her daughter was yesterday, at my proposing to send for Osmond, she hinted a disgust at the mention of his name, and said, it would make little difference to her, whether Julia died or married him.

Can it be possible for Heaven to suffer excellence like Osmond's to be so cruelly oppressed, and gratify the inhuman wishes of a tyrannic father!—Montague, what a savage is Westmorland!—I cannot form to my imagination how he purposes to act after disinheriting his son. He must not expect to live a great while; and who is the object he means should benefit by his dissolution?—Strange perverseness!—The portrait of such a father ought to be held up to public view, and, by striking the beholders with horror, remedy a fault too common in many parents, that of disliking their sons for no other reason, but because they look on them as rivals, who are to succeed to the fortunes they possess, when death prevents their enjoying them further.

Suffolk has been thought worse these twelve hours past, than he has been yet. I supposed it not in nature. Every moment is expected to be his last. He has been perfectly in his senses, but never testified the least remorse for the untimely fate he has brought on himself. He asked to see Lady Julia, and, on being told her life was despaired of, exclaimed, with more strength than I imagined him capable of,

“Ah, it is Osmond's absence has occasioned it!—By Heaven I am satisfied!—she will not survive me—what a disappointment to his triumph!—My ashes shall rest in peace—I feared they would be disturbed by his attaining a felicity I should have enjoyed but for his cursed hand!”

Let

Let me own to you, that I commit a violence on my inclinations, when I enter his apartment; but the laws of hospitality require that attention often from me, and I dare not infringe upon them. Jack Ainsley never quits him. Pemberton's time is divided between his sister and the Duke.

Lady Caroline Denley is obliged to leave us to-morrow: she just now received a letter, which earnestly demands her presence in Kent. She very kindly proposed that Emily should remain with us.

Farewel! and believe me, dear Sir Charles,

Your sincere friend,

And most obedient servant,

MORTIMER.

To Lord MORTIMER.

St. James's-Square, Saturday Twelve o'Clock.

OH, that it were possible, my excellent Lord Mortimer, to convey to you the true dictates of my heart!—to shew you how sensible it is of your kindness, and how vast a fund of gratitude it contains!—Be assured there is no person to whom I would owe a favour like the one you offer, so soon as your Lordship—Think me not proud—Ah, my Lord! to your generous bosom I will confide a secret more painful to me than words can express—But, dear Mortimer, I cannot attempt to trace characters that unstring every nerve—that deprive me of reason—and cause me to feel, with double poignancy, the curse of being undeceived!—Break the seal of Osmond's packet, my Lord, and there learn that money has no part in the sad story—Confine it in your breast, and help me to exculpate

exculpate the infatuated Louisa, by casting the whole blame of the affair on him, who in all situations must be your Lordship's

Much-attached, and for-ever-obliged,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

P. S. I am just going to the Duke of Westmorland's.

To Lord MORTIMER.

My Lord,

St. James's-Square.

I Will not give your Lordship particulars of the conversation that passed between Westmorland and me—to do so would soil my paper with invectives and whirlwind passions. He tells me that Lord Osmond shall have the fortune his aunt left him—but not a stiver of his own money. The Duke means to marry, and indulges a prospect of having a second son, who may prove more worthy than his first.

I shall leave London in two hours—you alone know where I intend to direct my course.—I once more beg of your Lordship to forward my packet to Osmond when you think proper.

I wish I could carry with me an assurance that the divine Julia is out of danger!—But I hope much from her youth, and the goodness of her constitution. When she is able to bear the subject, tell her not to forget her vows to her absent Henry—that I know his ardent attachment to her to be incapable of change; and that he is the only man on earth who deserves her.—Yet, perhaps, it would be best to say nothing to her from Montague. If she is ignorant of the real situation

situation of her friend's heart, she will detest the thought of me.—Present my best, my affectionate respects to Lady Mortimer; and think me ever, with the highest regard, my Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most devoted, and obedient servant,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

To Lady CAROLINE DENLEY.

Windsor, Tuesday Morning.

AS you desired, Madam, I take up the pen to acquaint your Ladyship that Lady Julia gives us all great hopes of her recovery. She was this morning three hours without the least degree of fever, and of course perfectly sensible. But never did I see so many tears fall, as there did in that time from her eyes. She uttered not the name of Osmond; but, calling me to her, begged I would write to Lady Louisa Sydney, and inform her of the occurrences of the past week—she paused—

‘Yet, Emily,’ cried she, ‘you had best defer it for a few days longer: we will not disturb her wedding with the sound of wretchedness. ‘Louisa thinks me happy; let her remain in that notion as long as possible.—Emily, you shall not write for a while!’

Lady Pemberton begged to know whom she would have me write to?

‘To Louisa Sydney—Montague, now I should say: to her only, Madam, I do assure you.’

She wept most piteously, and Lady Pemberton seemed concerned that she had asked the question. I cannot bear to see her grief; yet Doctor W. says it must be encouraged. Lord Pemberton asked, during the interval that she had, if she should be sorry to hear the Duke of Suffolk was likely to recover?

‘Ah,

‘ Ah, my God,’ she exclaimed, ‘ what an inter-rogation!—No, my Lord, I should rejoice at it. You little imagine the many reasons I have to wish that he may live; but never, if I can help it, will I see him more!’

Could your Ladyship believe, that, notwithstanding the situation she is in, he appeared displeased with her answer? He did indeed; and turned from her with a peevish air. However, he commanded himself so far, as to make no reply; and left the apartment.

You observed, my dear aunt, how beautifully Lady Julia looked during the height of her delirium. Had you beheld her this morning, you would have repeated the remark. The paleness of her cheeks, the languor of her eyes, softened yet more by the tears she shed, gave me an idea of delicate loveliness that I never had before. Ah, what an angel in person and mind is destined to unhappiness! About noon she became again very ill, and has continued so ever since; but, as the fever intermits, her physician thinks he shall very shortly entirely banish it. Suffolk will live to torment her. I almost regret it. This day the people who attend him, found a surprizing change for the better in his situation. By the countenances of Lady Pemberton and her son, I am persuaded they still mean to give my sweet friend to him. A letter is just brought from the post-office for Lady Julia, which Lady Pemberton has opened —she calls me——

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At my request, her Ladyship has allowed me to transcribe the letter. It will convince you, my dear aunt, that evils accumulate, and fall without restraint on the head of the inestimable Julia.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Dear Madam,

AS I am no stranger to your Ladyship's friendship for Lady Louisa Sydney, I take the liberty of entreating you to come down directly to Sommerville-House, as she is very dangerously ill. I fear some dreadful account from Sir Charles Montague has reached her, as Sir George Sommerville, I am informed, received a letter from him to give reasons why he must drop his addresses. Lady Sommerville is my author of this intelligence. I dread the consequences to our poor Louisa!—Hasten, dear Lady Julia, to your friend, and pour the balm of comfort on her afflicted soul! No one but you can do it.

Sir George is also much indisposed, and confined to his bed. Good Heaven, what a melancholy dwelling is this become! I stopped here with my Lord in our way from London, and intended to have proceeded home to-morrow; but until I hear from you, I shall not stir.

With every good wish for Lady Pemberton, Lady Mortimer, and all under her roof, I am, dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Affectionate and obedient servant,

M. ARNE.

*Sommerville-House,
Monday Night.*

LADY PEMBERTON knows not how to act. She is fearful of communicating this information to Lady Julia in her next interval. If she does, I think it will effectually cure her of all distress! She is now writing to acquaint Lady Arne of her daughter's illness. — Adieu, my dear Madam! I am,

Your Ladyship's

Most dutifully affectionate

AMELIA EDGUMB.

To

*To Lady CAROLINE DENLEY.**Windsor, Saturday.*

I Have the happiness to tell your Ladyship that Lady Julia is able to quit her bed, though so weak and emaciated as to be obliged still to confine herself to her apartment. She has entirely lost her fever, and Doctor W. declares that his attendance is no longer necessary. Would to God I could inform you, that the painful guest which she harbours in her breast, seems also about to depart! but, alas! her affliction is yet excessive—the source from whence her eyes flow is inexhaustible, and the torrents of tears she now drops, fall in lieu of those that refused to come when their aid was so much wished for. I know not in what manner she can demonstrate an additional sorrow; for, ah! my Lady, additional sorrow yet awaits her. Her mother just now received an answer to her letter from Lady Arne: it was to acquaint her, that Sir George Sommerville died last Thursday night. The unfortunate Louisa was too ill to be informed of a catastrophe so shocking when Lady Arne wrote. Good God, what will be the end of all this calamity! But the omnipotent Being judges best how to dispose of the creatures his hand has formed, and will surely make the present miseries tend to the benefit of the most perfect of his works, though it might not be given us to discern in what manner. If Sir Charles Montague has (like the generality of his sex, when they have no longer difficulties to combat with) grown weary of the affections of an amiable, beautiful object, and by his perfidy brought her to the state she is in—if, by his ingratitude to her, he has shortened the existence of a worthy, venerable person,—great Heaven, how will his account stand at the last day! The man who in a heat of passion—who in a moment of intoxication—takes the life of another from whom perhaps he has received injuries, is condemned to death; but we have no law which punishes, as he deserves,

serves, the wretch that robs an innocent woman of peace, and occasions her to execrate each moment that she endures a life more tormenting than the most cruel death that even a Nero could devise. It would have been kinder of him to have presented a poniard to Sir George's bosom—to have administered a dose of poison to him—than to have killed him with grief! The crime is just the same in the eye of heaven, though made of no consequence by mankind, else we should not find so many instances happen of its commission amongst our acquaintances. It is impossible to name three persons so amiable, sensible, and charming, as Lady Julia, Lady Louisa, and Lord Osmond—it is as much impossible to name three persons so miserable as they are! Heaven grant them comfort, and me to see them yet as blessed as I wish them!

It is reported that Sir Charles Montague, in one night, lost at hazard more than his whole fortune was capable of paying. Mr. Ainsley, who is acquainted with every body's affairs, with all that is done or said—who is ever impatient to be the first to tell any remarkable piece of news,—a little while ago, gave me this information; but, on my questioning the matter pretty closely, I found he could not authenticate the intelligence by any one circumstance—No, no! Sir Charles has lost no money; but he has withdrawn his affections from the lovely Louisa, and has cast them on some very inferior object. May she experience the torment of forfeiting a heart she has inveigled from an amiable girl whose right it is! Not that I think the purchase of such a one at all desirable, or a deprivation of it in fact to be regretted; but we cannot easily reason away the sad affliction of discovering the man on whom we have placed our tenderest affections to be unworthy of them, as our disappointment serves only to embitter the anguish of being separated from the person at once beloved and despised. Paradoxical as this may sound, it is I am assured but too often the case; and a female thus situated is a creature truly pitiable!

The Duke of Suffolk is in a fair way of doing well. Lady Julia's relations have been so humane as not to
mention

mention his name to her, since I wrote last. You may be certain she studiously avoids every subject that respects him.

The good Mournies has received new life since her sweet young Lady has been pronounced out of danger. Her attachment is well accounted for. She lived in the family before my amiable friend was born: when that event happened, she took charge of her immediately, and they have never been separated a week together since. Mournies is the daughter of a reputable Bourgeois who resided in Dijon. By a series of misfortunes, himself, his wife, and four girls, were reduced to extreme poverty. The late Lord Pemberton and his Lady, in making a tour of the middle provinces of France, remained at Dijon a few days; some lucky accident brought them acquainted with the miserable group, whom they bountifully relieved, and, at the mother's request, Lady Pemberton took her eldest daughter, then about nineteen, into her service. Her Ladyship found her tolerably accomplished for one of her station, of excellent principles, and well calculated, in spite of her youth, to attend on growing persons. She proved herself more worthy every day of Lady Pemberton's kindness, and demonstrated the highest sentiments of gratitude. On the Ladies quitting the convent where they were educated, Mournies became the maid only of Lady Julia, who has the most tender affection for her. At present this amiable creature is in high wrath with Mr. Ainsley. Unhappily for the little animal, he chose this morning to distinguish a very favourite lap-dog of Lady Julia's by some marks of attention; the dog, in a playful way, not uncommon, snatched rather rudely at his hand; Mr. Ainsley (who of the two owned least sagacity) fancied Bijou mad, and, without hesitation, or respect to punctilios of ceremony, shot him dead on the spot. Mournies, on hearing the dreadful fate of her Lady's (and of course her own) much-loved Bijou, flew to Lady Pemberton, and, in the sorrow of her heart, complained bitterly of his inhumanity. When Lady Julia was told of it, she very calmly said, that Mr.

Ainsley

Ainsley acted very well, if he had cause for his suspicion, and bid Mournies not to regret what could not possibly be remedied. Your Ladyship would regard Mournies as much as I do, did you see her assiduously endeavouring to divert Lady Julia's attention from melancholy subjects. The method she generally takes, is, to remind her of the pleasantries that Lady Mortimer, and Lady Louisa, were for ever practising on her and Clairon, when they were all in the convent at Paris.

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Good Good, my dear Madam! what a request has Lady Julia this instant made me! It is to write Lady Louisa an account of the quarrel between Lord Osmond and the Duke; to describe the sad consequences that ensued from it!—A hard task indeed! but she shall be obeyed—Perhaps the hand of death may close the eyes of her friend before my letter can reach Sommerville-House. Should it arrive at an improper season, Lady Arne will not suffer it to be given to her—there is some comfort in that thought.—Again Lady Julia summons me—

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She will write a few lines herself to her friend, she says, to prevent her entertaining causeless apprehension: 'for, my dear Emily,' added she, 'if you tell her I have been dangerously ill, she will suppose me still in that condition, unless she sees my own writing. I will therefore scratch a few lines, and enclose your melancholy detail, which I promise you I shall not give myself the torment of perusing—yet the horrid facts are lettered here,' putting her hand on her heart, 'in such indelible characters as no time can ever obliterate, or render less poignant to my feelings!—But you shall see that I do not seek any means of presenting afresh to my fancy the images of that fatal night. Write freely then, my Emily: I will not read your letter.'

I need

I need not mention to your Ladyship that a violent flood of grief followed these words: you know what she suffers, and must suppose it.

Adieu, my dear Madam! I will immediately set about the most painful employment that ever I engaged in. With every dutiful sentiment, I am, your Ladyship's

Very affectionate niece,

AMELIA EDGCUMB.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

ONCE more do I address my amiable friend. It is again given me to declare the warm feelings of a heart, which, in every state, whether of happiness or misery, beats respondent to the lively affection that yours is replete with for your poor Julia!—Ah, my Louisa! what have I not endured since my pen was last employed in this manner!—You will compassionate my wretchedness, when you are informed of what I have gone through—You will sympathize more deeply than I wish you to do, in the sad reverse of my fortune!—I have entreated Emily Edgcumb to give you those particulars which my weak hand dares not transcribe—she will also tell you that I have been indisposed— but am now almost recovered. I enquired yesterday of Lady Pemberton whether you was married? She answered no; but could not ascribe the reason. I ask of you, my Louisa, why this delay? No letter from you has reached me for an age. Ah, do not keep me thus ignorant of your situation! I can but ill bear the pain of suspense just now. Perhaps you are very ill!—Pity me, my God—and let me not have that affliction added to my sufferings!—Farewel, dear Louisa! I shall soon have strength to write to you more fully. I am,

Ever yours,

JULIA HERBERT.
To

To Lady CAROLINE DENLEY.

Windsor, Thursday Morning.

LADY Pemberton found, a little while ago, my dear Madam, that Lady Julia seemed remarkably distressed. She attributed it to the silence of her friend, and, supposing that her fears concerning Louisa were raised to a proper height, to prepare her for the melancholy accounts she had to tell, informed her with all possible caution of what Lady Arne had written. She was inexpressibly shocked; and, as soon as speech was afforded her, entreated her mother to let her set out directly for Sommerville-House. Lady Pemberton started at the proposal. She asked how in her emaciated state she could think of undertaking such a journey? How she could have a desire to be present at afflicting scenes that must be destructive to the small stock of spirits that so severe an illness had left her? 'Ah, Madam,' answered Lady Julia, 'the fatigue of travelling cannot harm me. Remaining at a distance from my unhappy Louisa, when the sight of me would calm her disturbed mind, must do it much more effectually. I have never been selfish enough to wish to avoid a spectacle of woe, if my presence could be a consolation to any poor sufferer—shall I be now afraid of it, when Louisa Sydney is the object of compassion? Oh, my mother! let me hasten to her. In administering comfort to her griefs, I shall learn to forget my own. Dear Madam, refuse me not every thing that concerns my peace!' 'Every thing, Julia!' said Lady Pemberton with an air of displeasure; 'I never refuse your wishes, but in matters that, you ought to be sensible, would make you miserable, were I to grant them.'

'And is it the case now, my Lady?'

'It is. I should be mad, was I to suffer your departure from me at such a time.'

'Unfortunate girl!' exclaimed Lady Julia: 'I have indeed lost your confidence, Madam! you make

me feel it very sensibly—Ah, my Louisa!—you will be the victim of my mother's fears.'

She wept bitterly. Lady Mortimer asked why she would seek to distress herself so unreasonably? What fears her mother could have, excepting such as respected her health?

'Far other fears,' replied she, "occupy my mother's bosom!—Dear Madam, be pleased to answer me with candour," addressing Lady Pemberton: 'Are you not afraid that I shall see Lord Osmond—that I shall correspond with him when from under your eye?—You are silent, my mother—ah, I read your thoughts too plainly!—You think I have already acted with disguise, and may do so again—but be convinced, that I will take no step which can draw on me your censure. Without your approbation, my eyes shall never behold Lord Osmond. I will shun every spot where there is a probability of his appearing. No letter from him shall be received by me; nor will I ever make him master of a line of my writing, unless I have your leave for it. I will bind myself by the most solemn vows in each article, so you will but let me try to save my Louisa.—Dear Madam, if you doubt my assurances, appoint some vigilant person, whom you can trust, to guard my conduct—to watch over every action—I shall think it no hardship—and let that person be my companion to Sommerville-House. Yet, Madam, I will give you an instance of my sincerity, by declaring, even in the moment when most of all I dread your displeasure—when I most apprehend its being a barrier to the favour I solicit, that, though I marry not Lord Osmond, his image will be ever present to my thoughts. I have made him a promise of not uniting myself to any other, and I will keep it as inviolably as I do my faith in heaven—nay more! I shall thank any of my friends to inform him of the obligations I am confined under, and that obedience, but not inclination, constrains me to adopt such a carriage.—I have disclosed the situation of my heart to you—I have vowed to do no more than continue to love Lord Osmond.—I see your Ladyship is angry—

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the most rigid duty cannot exact a further sacrifice than what I have made.—And now, my dear mother, on the conditions I propose, permit me to visit my Louisa!—My heart feels sorely oppressed; do not add to the weight it endures by keeping me from her, I conjure you!

Lady Pemberton, observing that she grew paler every instant, that her eyes assumed a langour rather alarming, and that she breathed short, seemed terrified.

‘Compose yourself, my dear girl!’ said she; ‘you exhaust your spirits. I will consider on what you demand; and, if my reason does not absolutely oppose it, I will indulge you.’

Lady Julia clasped her hands with a meek fervour: ‘But, my dear Madam, every moment is precious—pardon my presumption—when, my mother, shall I know your determination?’

‘In an hour,’ said Lady Pemberton, and left the room. We begged her to repose a while on a sofa.

‘My dear Caroline—my kind Emily,’ cried she, ‘I can taste no repose.’—She ordered Mournies to pack up immediately a few cloaths. ‘I know not,’ said she, ‘whether some other person may not be appointed to attend on me—I fear you will be left behind.’ ‘If I do not go with you,’ answered she in French, ‘I will certainly follow you; therefore, I may at the same time put up cloaths for myself!’

‘Well, make haste, my good Mournies; let us not be accessory to the delay of this journey.’ Mournies departed to execute her charge.

‘And now, Caroline,’ said the sweet Julia, ‘tell me whether you know a being who has more reason for grief than I have? My mother’s displeasure I have incurred; her countenance plainly reveals it—and for what? Why, for loving a man she is unhappily prejudiced against—a man whose perfection makes him the boast of human nature. I cannot help regarding him beyond every other of his sex—indeed, was my heart capable of change in this respect, I should be

the most despicable of creatures.—Yet I have obeyed the injunctions of duty; I have promised to hold no communication with him—never to marry him—hard sacrifice!—and still it weighs very little with Lady Pemberton: her affections are alienated from me; she is diffident of my honour.—Separated for ever from Osmond—conscious of the pangs he suffers, which penetrate my bosom with double woe—held unworthy of my mother's confidence—and perhaps at this moment robbed of the friend who was dearer to me than life—in what shape, my Caroline, can further distress approach me?"

Her sister wiped away the tears that fell on her cheeks—her own eyes were not dry.

'Let me not imagine, my dear Julia,' she replied, 'that your piety fled with your happiness. It has hitherto been your brightest charm; and the Almighty chuses to try the strength of it, by sending you afflictions. If you sustain them with proper resignation, how pleasing in his eyes will you render yourself,—and what an example to your sex! I really cannot blame Lady Pemberton for objecting to your departure from her at such a time: she has no suspicions injurious to your sentiments, and only fears for your health. If, in consequence of your present removal, you should relapse into the dangerous illness from which you are scarcely recovered—if Lady Pemberton should be deprived of her daughter—she must eternally reproach herself for consenting to so improper a request.'

'Ah, Caroline! Lady Pemberton no longer retains that warm tenderness for her Julia that always made me so happy. My death would be an affliction soon forgotten!—but there is no probability of its happening from my visiting Louisa. Say nothing more to dissuade me from it. Hasten to my mother, and urge her to let me depart immediately.' Lady Mortimer saw it was impossible to refuse her, and went in pursuit of Lady Pemberton. What they have resolved, I know not; but they are both closetted with Lord Pemberton and his wife. I left Lady

Almeria

Almeria with her sister, whose pale, emaciated form, and streaming eyes, affected me too visibly to allow of my remaining in her presence.

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Eleven o'Clock.

It is at length determined that Lady Julia is to leave us. The carriage is preparing to carry her away from Windsor—my heart sinks at the thought. Lord Pemberton is to be her escort.

Lady Julia is all gratitude for her mother's kindness in permitting her departure. She certainly acts from the impulses of her heart, not in conformity to her judgment; for she fears, as I do, that the journey will be prejudicial to her daughter, but cannot prevail on herself to put a negative on a request so ardently made to her. Lord Pemberton's post-coach conveys them to Sommerville-House—I see it driving round—I must bid adieu to my angel friend—Ah, how painful is the idea of parting with her!

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I found Lady Julia in her mother's apartment on her knees, begging to be admitted to the same place she had ever held in her affections—What a beautiful figure for the pencil of some artist would she have made at the time! Lady Pemberton raised, and pressed her to her bosom. She assured her that there was no alteration in her sentiments concerning her; begged her not to attribute her refusing to give her to Lord Osmond, to caprice, or a change in her regard; and added, that she would, in some future day, think the disgust she shewed to the match very reasonable—and that her happiness, when the first intoxication of passion was over, would certainly be the victim of such a union. Lady Julia listened with melancholy attention whilst her mother spoke. When she finished, she again repeated her assurances of not deviating in the

smallest point from the promise she had made her Ladyship. She told her, that, as it would be a great consolation to her to remain a few months with Louisa, (if it pleased heaven to spare her to her,) she should take it as a particular favour, if her Ladyship would allow her to do so. Her mother said, That, though she must lament her absence, and be impatient for her return, yet she should be entirely mistress of her own time, and spend it where she chose.—Some one rapped at the door. Lady Pemberton supposed it to be her son, and bid the person enter. How astonished was Lady Julia to see Mr. Ainsley appear! It was the first time of their meeting since that dreadful night which witnessed so much confusion. She trembled, and threw herself into a chair almost fainting.

‘ Pardon, Madam, this intrusion,’ cried he to Lady Pemberton; but I come an humble suppliant to Lady Julia from my Lord Duke.’

‘ Good God, Sir!—what—what can he have to ask of the woman who owes all her wretchedness to him?—Tell him to forget me—that to be freed from any importunity he could make, I would drag this feeble form over the whole world, and be well satisfied, could it be a means of my avoiding him.’

‘ How shall I bear such an answer to the unfortunate Duke! Dear Madam, be more kind! Reflect on his agonies in knowing that you are about to leave Windsor—that he is hateful to you!—A man who loves so desperately as he does, who professes’—

‘ I will listen to none of his professions—tell him so.’

‘ He fears, your meeting with the vile Osmond, when from under Lady Pemberton’s sanction, might cause’——‘ The vile only can call Lord Osmond vile!——Leave my presence instantly, Mr. Ainsley——Good God, is this a time!—Madam, do you authorize Mr. Ainsley’s freedom?’

‘ I do not wish Julia to see you made uneasy; but still, my dear, you should hear what he has to impart from the Duke.’

‘ I will

‘ I will say it in a few words: he begs to have the honour of seeing Lady Julia, before she goes, for five minutes.’ ‘ No Sir; never, never with my own consent, shall I approach him! As a fellow-creature, I wish him well; but, if he is desirous of obliging me, he will banish himself from my sight for ever.—— Emily, you say the coach waits——why do I thus loiter?’ Lord Mortimer came: she gave him her hand, and he led her out of the apartment.

In crossing a parlour, a little Italian grey-hound of Lord Osmond’s, which he was remarkably fond of, and which I imagine he forgot in his confusion to take with him, ran towards the beloved of his Lord; it appeared overjoyed to see her, and fawned upon her with extasy. She took him in her arms, and with many tears returned the caresses he gave her. ‘ Carry him with you, Julia,’ cried Lord Mortimer. ‘ Ah, no!’ she replied; ‘ I dare not. What will Lord Pemberton say? It may be looked on as a violation partly of the promises I have made, to take with me any thing Lord Osmond is so much attached to——it may look as if I meant to renew the intelligence we so lately held, by affording him an opportunity of seeing or writing to me, either of which he must do, to claim his Fidele.’ ‘ And think you,’ said my Lord, ‘ he will only on Fidele’s account seek to see or write to you?——unjust girl!’ ‘ Here comes a second time, my brother, the detestable friend of Suffolk——I will hold no further converse with him; let me fly!—My sweet Fidele, never more shall I behold you, or the dear object to whom you belong!—Horrible reflection!’ She put down the dog, and went towards the coach with speed enough to avoid Mr. Ainsley, who no doubt came to enforce the request he had before with unparalleled effrontery made to her. Fidele seemed unwilling to be again deprived of her, and leaped into the carriage after her. As Lord Pemberton entered it, I saw him stroke the little animal; so I suppose he had no objection to its attendance on his fair companion.

I feel strangely melancholy now that I have lost Lady Julia. Ah, who can know her and not be grieved at her absence! Lady Pemberton will remain here till her son returns, and then she goes with him, his wife, and Lady Almeria, to my Lord's seat in Hertfordshire, for a few weeks. They are urgent with me to accompany them thither; but I shall stay with Lady Mortimer, till your Ladyship gives us the pleasure of seeing you at Windsor, and then I am, you know, at your disposal.

The Duke of Suffolk, Lord Mortimer tells me, is outrageous at Lady Julia's departure. He judges that she has contrived it merely to meet Osmond—he curses vehemently his inability to follow, and prevent their happiness.—I have often heard love called an exalted passion: it refines ignoble sentiments, but I am sure it can also debase good ones. I will quote the Duke as an instance. Nothing could be more amiable than he was, till he loved ardently Lady Julia——till jealousy acted on his mind like a venomous serpent; and now, rather than see her blessed with another, he would gladly hear that she no longer lived.—I hate him in his present disposition with all my heart.

Mr. Ainsley (the Morning-Post of Windsor) says he received a letter yesterday, which mentions that Lady Henrietta Marchmont and her aunt are at Bright-helmstone. They went down with the Duke of Westmorland six days ago. His Grace's attention to her Ladyship appears to exceed the bounds of Friendship; and, it is confidently said, he means to become a suitor for those affections his son would not accept of. Methinks I should like to see in what manner the *airs* and *graces* of a lover fit on the old Duke. Sure, had he beheld how inimitably his Osmond adored that character, he never could have been preposterous enough, afterwards, to figure in the same line, however different the objects of their choice are! I do not suppose that Lady Henrietta will accept of the Duke: she is a great admirer of beauty, and never was woman more passionately in love than she was, three months

months ago, with Lord Osmond. But time will discover all.

Lady Mortimer bids me say, that it will be very kind of your Ladyship to hasten back to Windsor—that her spirits are fled—and that she will stand in need of so consolatory a friend as you are, when her mother and the rest are gone, to cheer her gloomy thoughts. She adds, also, that I only cry and sob in concert with her; that her Lord has no inclination to comfort her, for that he is equally unhappy with herself at the mournful situation of their friends—and, more than all, she wants your Ladyship to assist her in planning some means or other to restore those friends to that height of happiness from whence they are fallen. That you may be able to accomplish so difficult an undertaking, is the sincere wish of, my dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most dutifully affectionate

AMELIA EDGCUMBE.

To Lady Dowager PEMBERTON.

YOU made me promise, dear Madam, to write to you very particularly respecting Julia—I will obey your Ladyship; and am extremely well inclined to the employment, as sleep is banished from my eyes by the melancholy that surrounds me.

Julia was so much satisfied with the idea of visiting her friend, that, upon the whole, I thought her more composed than I had known her, since the departure of the man she is unhappily attached to. This composure lasted for the three first hours of our journey. She spoke warmly of your Ladyship's tenderness—of the pleasure you seemed to feel in Almeria's being so greatly esteemed and admired. She then expatiated on the felicity I enjoyed with a charming companion, like my Sophia, and next mentioned the Mortimer's.

Her dear Caroline, she said, after the much-dreaded trial she must expect is over, would be more cheerful than ever. 'When I return to town, my Lord, I shall find great amusement in my new relation!' I replied, that, if we could but again see her look gay, we might boast of being as happy a family as any in the universe. She bowed; thanked me with tears; and answered, she should be a most ungrateful creature, if she did not derive happiness from knowing that those she so highly regarded possessed it.

I admired a little greyhound which reclined on her lap, and observed, that I had seen Lord Budenall caress it. I asked whether it was his present? She trembled, turned red, and replied:

'It is no present, my Lord; nor have I a right to bring it from Windsor—the dog belongs to Lord Osmond—it jumped into the coach after me.' I looked graver than I now wish I did.

'This dog, I believe, is esteemed only on his Lord's account; and I must think'——

'If it offends your Lordship that I should keep it, you can carry it back to Windsor.'

'Is it for Lord Osmond's sake that you thus cherish it, Julia; or is it because you admire the beauty of the greyhound?'

'There is no necessity for my answering the question brother—you can carry him back, if you please.'

'Say you *only* admire the beauty of the dog—you have no other motive for being fond of the animal, and I will not deprive you of him.'

'If you take the dog, you will certainly, my Lord, deprive me of a very great pleasure; but I shall not keep it at the expense of an untruth—the dog is very pretty; yet I should scarcely have regarded it, had it not been a favourite of Lord Osmond's, and consequently dear to me.'

'I do not, Julia, much like this avowal—however, it is an honest one—I would trust you in the company of Osmond, if I had your word that you would not listen to him—so high a dependance can be placed on you I am convinced. As to the animal, we are not

in the age of fairies. Fidele cannot speak : he has it not in his power to plead his master's passion ; he is not gifted with *any* of that *fascinating oratory*, which the seducing Osmond used when he made his way so artfully to your heart—You shall therefore keep the dog.'

'*Seducing Osmond!*' she repeated ; 'would to god, my Lord, you knew his worth'—

'*As well as you do!* you would say, Julia.'

'Aye, my Lord, if you will have it so!—or as well as every unprejudiced person does.'

'Why, it is not your sex alone that he seduces to think well of him ; but the unwary also of his own—to them he appears a model of perfection.'

'Well, my Lord!—you who are so wary—who see through the disguise he assumes—pray give me to understand what are those faults for which you arraign him! Hitherto you have condemned him in general terms only. Has the Duke of Suffolk told you of some vicious tendency that he has ; or did your penetration detect him in the practice of any immorality.'

'Ha! upon my soul, Caroline has given you lessons; you speak with warmth, Julia!'

'Pardon me, my Lord ; I meant not to offend, but to know whether it is out of fraternal tenderness you separate me from the only man I ever did, or ever will love ; or whether it is to satisfy the rancorous malice of the hated Suffolk?'

'Have a care, Julia! It is rather poignant to have a friend spoken of with such unreasonable bitterness.'—

'And how much more poignant, my Lord, to hear the man in whom all my love centers loaded with aspersions he merits not?—Believe this, and tell it to your friend—Lord Osmond seduced not my affections: they were fixed on him long before I imagined that I was dear to him. It is unkind of you to renew my affliction on his account, when I am about to encounter an almost insupportable share in beholding the wretched situation of my poor Louisa! I make not Lord Osmond my topic ; I do not tire the ears of any-

one

one with the subject. In pity, therefore, my Lord let his name rest; let it be forgotten by all but her—who must cease to think, ere she can cease to think of him.’

She was violently affected—I repented from my soul all that I had said—I wished the cur at the devil for giving rise to such a conversation. Mournies looked at me as if I was more void of sensibility than the quadruped itself. I threw my arms round Julia; I begged her to forgive me—ever soft and amiable, she exchanged the words with me, and accused herself of petulance. She tried to regain her serenity; but it was impossible.

When we were within sixteen miles of Sommerville-House, she grew extremely alarmed. She would frequently catch me by the hand, and exclaim, ‘Suppose, my Lord, we find her dead!’ I endeavoured to quiet her fears; but they acted so powerfully on me, as to make me almost a coward. We stopped to change horses: I urged her to alight and take some refreshment. ‘Oh, no,’ she cried, ‘it would be wasting time! I stepped out, and brought her to the carriage a glass of weak negus. To oblige me, she put it to her lips, but declared she was incapable of swallowing. I heard her ask one of the people, if they knew any thing of the family at Sommerville-House? ‘Yes,’ the person answered, ‘the worthy Sir George Sommerville died this day week; and I heard the day before yesterday, that his niece Lady Louisa Sydney was dangerously ill.’ ‘And have you received no intelligence concerning her since?’ cried the terrified Julia. ‘No, my Lady,’ was the reply. I really trembled lest we should find Louisa no more: such a shock would, I was well convinced, put an end to my sister at once. I went into the stable-yard, and, beckoning to one of the footmen, bid him ride as fast as possible to Sommerville-House—if the worst I dreaded had happened, to meet the carriage, and say, he had just been informed by a tenant of the late Sir George’s, of whom he had enquired for Lady Louisa, that Lady Arne, unwilling she should be in the house at the time they

were

were about to inter her uncle's remains, had carried her to Southampton that very morning. I took necessary precautions to make the postilions keep a slow pace; and was determined, if the fellow repeated the words I put in his mouth, to bring Julia back to the inn we had just left, where I found the people sufficiently ignorant for my purpose of the fate of Lady Louisa.

By this time night had approached—it was uncommonly dark—an inundation of rain fell from the heavens—the wind whistled from every corner. We heard the tolling of distant bells—a universal horror seemed to overspread us. Julia, cold and trembling, threw herself into my bosom, as if for refuge. ‘Ah, my Louisa,’ she exclaimed, ‘I have lost you! The very heavens compassionate, and sympathize in my sorrows!—Montague, can it be that I owe such a misfortune to you?—Dear brother, who knows but she wished to see me—to breath her last in my arms!—She had no mother to watch over her—to soothe her soul in its agony with maternal tenderness—no sisters near to officiate in such kind offices, as relieve the heart when overcharged with grief and pain: remote from every dear connection—abandoned by the man who was to have blended each affectionate title in one—left to the care of an ill-natured aunt, and unfeeling servants, she died.—Oh how slight must she have thought my regard for her!’

I blamed her for supposing a circumstance, which I saw no reason to apprehend had happened; and asked her, if she reckoned it as nothing for her Louisa to have Lady Arne with her? I represented what a terrible effect it might have on the poor invalid, to behold the person, who came with an intention of giving her comfort, so depressed, so much herself an object of affliction, by harbouring imaginary fears, as to stand more in need of consolation than the friend whose destiny she deplored. I used every art I was master of to prevail on her to let us return to the inn, and remain there till to-morrow, when she would be properly composed to meet her friend. I proposed dispatching a
servant

servant immediately to Sommerville-House, to say the Ladies might expect us in the morning. I could not by any means gain her consent: she begged, as a test of my fondness, that I would start no impediment to the completion of our journey as soon as possible. There was something so touching in her manner—her entreaty was made with such ardour, that to have persisted in dissuading her from going on, would have been cruel.

We were within six miles of the house, when Edward (the fellow I had sent) rode close by the window. I put down the glass, and asked if he wanted any thing? 'Yes, my Lord,' he answered, 'to tell you that I have just heard Lady Louisa Sydney is better than she was, and that there are strong hopes of her recovery.' Julia uttered some ejaculations of gratitude to Heaven—the postilions were ordered to make haste; and we compensated by the speed with which we flew, for the time we had lost before.

As we entered the great gates that enclose the coach-road up to the house, and which is of considerable length, we saw a prodigious light advancing towards us. As we each approached, we perceived a great number of men on horseback, bearing torches in their hands, and moving slowly in procession. We were not at a loss to know, that it was Sir George Sommerville's body they were conducting to its last melancholy habitation. We were obliged to stop until the dismal pageant passed. I bitterly regretted their chusing to render the scene more affecting, by performing the ceremony of burial in the night, on my sister's account, whose spirits did not stand in need of such an additional shock as this must have given them. Thirty or forty men on horseback riding in pairs carried torches; after them followed the hearse, with twelve persons on each side, walking, with torches in their hands also: they were succeeded by twelve mourning coaches, with two servants behind each, holding flambeaux, and the procession closed with the like number of men as preceded the corpse, disposed in the same manner. You must imagine that we were detained a great while ere the whole cavalcade passed us. When we drove up to the

the

the hall-door, two servants appeared, whose mourning habits were suitable to the faces of sorrow they wore. Julia was unable to speak—she seemed fainting, and I supported her weak frame into an apartment they had thrown open for us. I placed her on a sofa, and applied volatiles. Lady Arne ran in, and assisted Mour-nies and myself in recovering her. After we had accomplished it, she exclaimed, ‘Ah, Madam! what are my feelings at beholding so much distress, to those of Louisa, who is immediately engaged in it!—How is she, Madam?—Let me fly to my dearest’—

‘Stop, Lady Julia!’ said Lady Arne, ‘you are not in a condition to approach your friend—have some compassion on yourself—on Louisa!’

‘Your Ladyship is very considerate and kind—I would not for the universe surprize her: but pray prepare her to expect me soon: I am all impatience to convince her of the part I take in her afflictions.’

‘Lady Louisa,’ answered she, ‘is still very ill; yet she has passed the crisis of her disorder, and we have reason to trust that she will do well.’

Lady Arne ordered in refreshments—she endeavoured to divert my sister’s attention from the purposed visit; but it was in vain—no discourse could render Julia forgetful of her friend, and that the only motive of her journey was to console her. Lady Arne retired to observe whether her patient could bear an interview with Julia. In half an hour she came back, and informed us that Lady Louisa waited with the utmost anxiety to see my sister. She begged me to accompany Julia and herself to Louisa’s apartment. I presented her my hand, and we followed the eager steps of Julia.

The invalid was on a sofa, supported by pillows, emaciated, pale, and agitated. My sister sunk into her arms, which were opened ready to receive her. They spoke not a syllable—but such silence was sufficiently eloquent, and plainly told the conflicting passions that filled the bosoms of both.

‘What, dear Louisa,’ cried I, unwilling to let them continue in a state so hurtful, ‘am I then totally
disregarded

disregarded by you!—not even a look of welcome after a tedious absence to an old friend!’ She reached forth her hand, and permitted me to embrace her.

‘Thank Heaven, my Lord, that I am allowed to have so great a blessing!—I thank my excellent Lady Pemberton for sparing her to me; and I thank you also, for bringing her to a poor creature, whom I should have pronounced, a few hours ago, but for Lady Arne’s kindness, neglected by all the world.’

‘From a number of accidents too tiresome now to mention, Julia heard not of your indisposition till this morning—You see, my dear Louisa, with what haste we have flown to you—judge by that of our love, and endeavour to get well, if you value our happiness.’

‘I cannot, Lord Pemberton, express my gratitude!—Ah, my Julia! could you think it?—Sir George has never once visited me since’——

‘You must not speak much, my dear,’ cried Lady Arne: ‘your uncle is fearful of getting the fever you have had—we all dissuade him from approaching you.’

‘Very true, Madam! I am unreasonable and selfish—But, surely, my eyes deceive me, or you are much changed, dear Julia, since we last parted.—Your hurrying life has been of no advantage to your health, I fear: you are become thin and pale.’

‘Fatigue causes the alteration, Louisa,’ answered my sister: ‘mind not my looks—I am very well.—But you have not satisfied my solicitude by saying how you are?’

‘I am free from pain just now, excepting that which admits of no remedy.—Lady Arne tells me, that in the height of my illness she wrote to beg of you to come down—she then mentioned the cruel treatment—but I am not able to say more—retire, my Julia, and seek some repose—your countenance speaks the want of it. The knowledge of having you under the same roof with me, will ensure me a quiet night.’

We left her apartment, fearful of exhausting her too much. Lady Arne and I conducted Julia to her chamber,

chamber, and, taking leave of her there, returned to the drawing-room. She then informed me, that Lady Louisa, about three weeks ago, had taken a cold, which was attended by a fever, and confined her to her bed. In the midst of it, she received a letter from Sir Charles Montague, that affected her deeply: the consequence was, her fever encreased; it attacked her nerves to the highest degree, and at last brought her into a most dangerous situation. Yesterday, the physician (who had been called in) declared, would determine her fate—if she out-lived it, she might recover.

‘She is ignorant, you find,’ added her Ladyship, ‘of Sir George’s death. To have told her of it, or even that he was more indisposed than usual, would have destroyed her.’

I enquired for Lady Sommerville.

‘Oh, my Lord, she preserves all the forms of sorrow generally worn on these occasions; but, take my word for it, she is a second Lady Kitty Crocodile!’

‘Does she not seem to compassionate the condition of Lady Louisa?’

‘I will give your Lordship a specimen how far she does it. I thought decency required that I should this morning attend her. She was buried in affliction, and answered the questions I asked concerning her health only with groans, sighs, and sobs. When in some measure appeased, she demanded whether Lady Louisa had left her apartment yet?—if she was at all concerned at her Uncle’s death?—or testified marks of pleasure on the occasion? I expressed my astonishment at such interrogations, as she could be no stranger to the alarming illness of Louisa; and said I thought it by no means safe to make her acquainted with a circumstance that must at least render her wretched—not to say a word of the dismal effects it might produce on her at such a time. She sneered maliciously, and cried, ‘Oh, she has acted her part to admiration!—but there is no further necessity for pretending so much affection—Sir George has left her more than ever she expected to gain by her art—I am now deprived of him in whom
all

all my happiness centered through her means.' 'How, Madam!—for Heaven's sake be careful,' exclaimed I, 'of what you say!—*Through her means!*' 'Yes, Lady Arne, I repeat the words—*through her means!*—It was owing to her misconduct that she lost Sir Charles Montague's affections.—He thought her too *kind* a *mistress* to make a wife of—He gave Sir George Somerville such cogent reasons for withdrawing his addresses, as at once broke his heart—He could not outlive the knowledge of his niece's dishonour—Sir George, poor Man! would never regulate himself by my advice—I foresaw what must happen very plainly.'—I declared my indignation at her vile allusion; and told her how much she would suffer in the opinion of a world, well confirmed in a belief that Lady Louisa's virtue is immaculate, if she continued to speak of her in so unjust a manner. '*Immaculate!*' She iterated with a drawl; 'yes, truly, very immaculate!—Mr. Melmoth was glad at last to shake her off—her fondness became nauseous to his palled appetite—Oh, she would have broken her heart at his desertion, had not Sir Charles stepped in, and supplied his place—But her amorous nature could not restrain itself—She became his mistress, as I before hinted; and in that name lost every title to an honourable union with him.—Your Ladyship flares!—Take it on my word the girl you so warmly patronize—who wears so naturally the illusory mask of innocence, is in truth a most unworthy being?—What!—do you think it is in my disposition to injure her?—Oh, no!—I would even hide her crimes, were they not too shocking for concealment—nay! after what I am acquainted with, were I to let her friends remain ignorant of the viper they cherish in their bosoms, I should hold myself culpable in the sight of God, I am anxious, Lady Arne, that she should acknowledge herself in health, that I might bid her depart from a house, which shall no more be an asylum for vice. Her uncle, poor Sir George!'—and here she affected to weep,—desired I would insist on her retiring from the world, and hiding her shame in a remote corner of Scotland, where, amongst the rest, he has left her

her an old mansion. 'In that place,' cried he, 'the criminal girl will be sequestered from mankind—she will have time to contemplate on the misery that in a future state must be the lot of those who subdue not their passions; who, instead of sacrificing to Virtue, trample her laws under feet, and scoff at so fair an appearance—there she will be mortified—be humbled—and, I trust, at last, be penitent. I charge you, Lady Sommerville, to repeat these words to her—say, that with my dying voice I lay this injunction on her, to avoid of all things beholding Sir Charles more. Tell her that she has crushed the flattering heights of happiness my fond ideas had raised for her; and that the greatest misery which can be endured I experience in my latest moments—but I forgive and pity her.'

'How was it possible, Lady Sommerville,' exclaimed I, 'for Sir George to take at once Sir Charles Montague's evidence against his niece? It was unnatural, unjust—it is not feasible. His ears were inhumanly poisoned, no doubt. I will answer for the virtue of Lady Louisa Sydney!' 'You are one of those predetermined people, Lady Arne, who can never be reasoned out of an opinion they have once formed; and, rather than have it thought your judgment could err in the choice of a friend, will shut your senses to the conviction of the most flagrant faults that might appear in their conduct.' 'You are at liberty, Madam, to suppose just what you please of me,' replied I; 'it is of no consequence: but of this be assured, that there is a person who will not tamely suffer Lady Louisa's character to be falsely reproached—Lord Clermont will trace the matter to the bottom. If Sir Charles has been the author of such mean lies (which I own to you I cannot believe), he must answer for them to her brother with his life.' Lady Sommerville changed colour, and was proceeding to invective when I quitted her apartment.

I expressed my astonishment at the abominable principles that must sway Lady Sommerville's conduct. 'Surely, Madam,' exclaimed I, 'she speaks injuriously of Louisa!'

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‘If the slightest circumstance of her charge can be proved just,’ replied Lady Arne, ‘I will be content to forfeit my existence. I am satisfied that there is not a word of truth in the whole relation. Ah, my Lord, let us beware of assisting this vile woman’s scheme by imbibing the noxious errors she sedulously tempts us with! Louisa is virtuous—there is no doubt of it! A young beautiful creature deprived of parents—left to herself in a censorious age, without the countenance of any respectable female character—must be liable to great barbarity from the multitude of slanderers that pester the earth—from the envious of her own sex, and from the libertines of yours. To reduce Louisa to such a situation is Lady Sommerville’s aim. By tarnishing her reputation, she hopes to prevent her finding any sanction among those the oppressed girl looks on as friends. What source this hatred springs from I know not; but Lady Sommerville shall be disappointed in a great measure. I will take the amiable Louisa to my house, as soon as her strength can admit of her removal; and whilst my Lord and I live, she shall never feel the want of parents.’

I commended her Ladyship’s benevolence. I said I was convinced that no malevolent attack could reach Louisa’s fame, if under the patronage of one, whose excellent qualities were well known all over the kingdom; and that my family and self should hold the injured girl dearer than ever. We separated, and I will bid your Ladyship adieu for the present.

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Friday Morning.

Julia has suffered no other inconveniency from her journey than fatigue; the natural consequence even to people in health of travelling post. She looks better than she has done since her illness.

Lady Louisa has had a very good night’s rest: she has not near so great a degree of fever, and I dare say will soon regain her health. She and Julia distress me
with

with their acknowledgments for the part I had in bringing them together. The meeting delights me almost as much as it does them, since I perceive the advantages that have accrued from it.—If Louisa continues on the recovery, Julia will to-morrow acquaint her with Sir George's death.

I have sent my respects to the fair *Eplefian*, and begged permission to make my compliments of enquiry and condolence in person—I wait the answer. The *sorrowing* dame has not left her apartments since the poor Baronet's death—Faith, she grieves too vehemently!

Does not an instant's recollection bring back to your Ladyship's idea Sir George Sommerville making his addresses to Miss Meadows?—The ridiculous circumstance happened not quite two years ago. Sir George was favourably received on account of his fortune—Miss Meadows had not a doit, and his age and infirmities were disregarded, till one unlucky evening that she met Montague at your house. He thought her pretty, and, whilst Louisa Sydney was engaged at cards, paid her some attention. The Lady's constitution being of the amorous sort, at sight of Sir Charles was affected—his notice soon fired her imagination with the hope of his becoming Sir George's rival; and, for several days after, she behaved so haughtily to her old lover, as would have caused an everlasting breach, had he not been absurd on the occasion beyond expression. She waited a month in the flattering notion of Montague's professing himself an humble suitor, sparing no pains to afford him an opportunity of making the much wished-for declaration. At the end of it, finding her expectation disappointed, she held it wisest to embrace the occasion that then offered of escaping from poverty, judiciously supposing that a girl of five-and-twenty could discover '*ways and means*' enough of engrossing many of the pleasures of life which money might procure, even with a disagreeable companion.—In fine, she married him, and, if report says true, Sir George often wished the passion of love had been confined to the demons of hell, before his bosom had felt the pangs which

which caused him to solicit the union—But he is dead, and, in spite of Madam's tears, I believe she is content!—Now, I have a strange idea that the Lady's unjust character of Louisa proceeds from no other motive, than the satisfying of an envious, revengeful temper, which hates her for being beloved by the man whom she would willingly have exchanged Sir George for.—I am summoned to her apartment—

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What a specious hypocrite is this! How well skilled in the low art of deceit!—On my entrance to her private drawing-room, she advanced several paces to meet me. Her black flowing robes, and white handkerchief, gave her the mournful dignity of a tragedy-queen, whilst an attendant stood behind her, habited also in the appendages of woe, with a smelling-bottle in her hand, which frequently was applied to the disconsolate fair-one's nose. Have I not heard it said, Madam, that women of a particular cast find comfort in the death of a husband, from the recollection of the becoming air their fables will give? My life for it, Lady Sommerville took a degree of pleasure in her spouse's last moments from the thought! Her dress was studied, it fitted her shape to admiration; the black set off her skin and complexion; and altogether I never saw her person appear to so much advantage. She accepted of my hand, which I offered to conduct her back to her seat; and, after the poignancy of her affliction was a little abated, she found a multiplicity of words to pour forth her doleful lamentations on the loss she had sustained in a man, *whose soul was the congenial partner of her own—a man in whom her life was so wrapped up, that she was convinced she could not long survive him—and from that reflexion she derived consolation.* I cannot tell your Ladyship the hundredth part of the laughable stuff she uttered—At length she introduced the subject of Louisa and Montague: almost verbatim was I obliged to listen to the account that was given Lady Arne. I believe she was vexed at the composure with which

which I did so. I fixed my eyes steadily on her, during the whole relation. She imagined that I saw through the falshood which she spoke—conscious guilt flushed her cheeks—she hesitated in her delivery with an aukward embarrassment. In short, had I before any doubts, her manner was sufficient to have convinced me, that she was only a vile calumniator of perfect innocence. ‘As you make this story, Madam,’ cried I, ‘very common, you can surely have no objection to entrust me with Montague’s letter to Sir George, which you say revealed to him his niece’s misconduct. It was not altogether generous of my friend Montague, to publish the indulgence he obtained of a lady.—But pray let me read the letter.’ She turned pale.

‘Would it were in my power, my Lord, to gratify you!’ replied she, ‘My dear Sir George, just before he died, made me commit it to the flames. It was owing to that fatal letter that I am now left to bewail his death!’

‘What was his motive, Madam, for having it destroyed?’

‘That it might not be a testimony of her shame.’

‘Good God, how you astonish me! I supposed, that, by way of wreaking vengeance on his unfortunate niece, he had enjoined you to spread the tale abroad; and I believed, that the violence of your affection for him, compelled you, against charity—against compassion, to obey so readily his last commands, which you were careful to fulfil, even in the smallest point, by speaking freely of this infamous story before your very servants.’

‘He made no request to me of secrecy, my Lord; and I do not chuse to have my character called in question, by harbouring an abandoned creature in my house.’

‘Ah, Madam, have a care that your present grief is not a burlesque on the memory of a man whose virtues demand tears that come spontaneously from the heart! Had you the affection you so strenuously declare, every thing that was dear to him would be equally so to you—you would have kept this recital (in which I must
be

be bold enough to say there is not the least probability of truth) from the world—Sir George's niece in you would find a tender protectress, instead of a merciless persecutor.'

Here I unhappily brought on a terrible storm. The *afflicted* Lady thought herself ill used in my daring to doubt the sincerity of her grief. She called me *an unfeeling savage—an impertinent wretch!*—asked, if such were the compliments I had in view to make her, when I sent the mock message of respect? She desired me to quit *her house* immediately, and to take with me the *sweet, amiable* Louisa, who, she must venture to assert, would have no objection to me, or any of my sex, that would supply the place of Sir Charles Montague. After this, she fell into a violent hysteric fit, from whence I left her woman to recover her as soon as it was judged proper.

To be sure, my situation is rather embarrassing. To remain in the house of a person to whom I wish to be under no obligation, and who has peremptorily desired my absence from it, is insupportable!—but to remove Louisa, who is yet unacquainted with her uncle's death, is a thing not to be done. My pride must be humbled, and her Ladyship a little further troubled with my residence in '*her house*'—Curiously mortifying!—However, I cannot leave my three amiable companions to become the victims of such a fury.

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Friday Evening.

I presume Lady Sommerville was struck with some sentiments of shame for what had happened, when her passion was abated. She sent for me two hours ago, and, with a very *stately* air, condescended to apologize for the harsh epithets she had used in her *agony of mind*, as she termed it—flattered herself I would pardon them, and honour *her house* so far as to make some stay in it. She said, she was just told that my sister had done *her* the favour of a visit: she hoped to be able to collect strength enough to entertain her in a few days—though

—though Lady Julia could not expect much amusement in the society of one so lost to pleasure as she was, and must ever be, thus separated from Sir George—but her gratitude was warmly excited towards Lady Julia for the charitable act she had done, in coming to her at such a time. I thanked her for her politeness, and declared it would not be in our power to accept of her invitation, as we only waited for Lady Louisa's being in a condition to travel, to attend her from Sommerville-House to Lady Arne's.

'To Lady Arne's!' exclaimed she: 'what! will Lady Arne be hardy enough to undertake the charge of her, after the caution my good-nature prompted me to give!—However, Lord Arne's is not the place her uncle appointed her to repent in! I will go this minute, and deliver his last message to Lady Louisa—I will omit in no article to mark out her duty to her—if she fails in obeying, I am not amenable to Heaven—I must acquit my conscience!'

She was flying hastily towards the door, when I caught hold of her——

'Stop, Madam!' cried I: 'you forget that you cannot immediately summon strength to leave your apartment—a few days hence will scarcely afford it to you!'

Oh, what a rage she was in!—She attempted to strike me as I drew her towards her seat—never did I see one of the sex appear so masculine as she did at the time. I waited patiently after I had replaced her, till she had vented her indignation; determined, if she should be attacked with another fit, not to stir till she had gone thro' the whole process, and I had in some measure brought her out of her transports. The moment of tolerable composure at last arrived, and she asked me how it happened, that I testified so little regard for my sister's honour, as to let her be the companion of a creature lost to every principle of virtue?—'If, my Lord, added she, 'Lady Pemberton was informed of those circumstances I have mentioned to you, she would not esteem Lady Julia's associating with a wretch like Louisa, such a matter of indifference—

But young men, like your Lordship, make light of these affairs !' 'Too much, dear Madam, has been already said on this silly subject. My sister's honour is the same with me as my own—it will receive no prejudice from the society of Lady Louisa. We will accept of the kind offer you make us of your house for a few days ; in that time our patient may be better, and we will trouble you no longer.'

She burst into a terrible flood of tears, which was the only passage her spite could have, and I retired.

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I have been consulting with Lady Arne and Julia about informing Louisa of her uncle's death—they agree with me in thinking it best not to postpone the disagreeable intelligence till to-morrow, lest Lady Sommerville should anticipate us, whose rude discovery of such a calamity would certainly be productive of bad consequences. Was it to effect her destruction, I am persuaded Lady Sommerville would be delighted.—It is resolved, that my sister shall directly prepare her to expect the worst, by saying that Sir George is very ill.—Julia is gone to Louisa's apartment for the purpose—I sincerely pity them both!

It is not possible to describe how uneasy Julia was when I related to her and Lady Arne all that passed between Lady Sommerville and me. I thought it right to conceal nothing from her. She wept exceedingly, and, putting her arm through mine, exclaimed, 'My dearest brother, what obligations you lay me under, for thus befriending a poor orphan who is so cruelly aspersed! Ah, my Lord, again you are all goodness, all tenderness to your Julia!'—And now let me assure your Ladyship, that I am convinced my sister's engaging in scenes of the sort, however distressing, is beneficial to her in one respect: they carry her reflections from herself, and leave her not a moment to think of Osmond. Time, the great destroyer of all attachments, and absence, its twin-brother, will, I trust, finish the great work, and wholly eradicate him from her breast.

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It much puzzles me to conjecture from what cause Sir Charles Montague's behaviour has proceeded. The more I reflect on the motive which it is said induced him to wave the connexion he was on the point of making, the more frivolous does it seem in my eyes. He always appeared too prudent to be drawn into deep play; and why his disposition should so suddenly change, and he forget his usual discretion, more especially on the eve of his nuptials, I cannot conceive! If he was addicted to gaming, he indulged himself in it so secretly, as to leave no clue by which his most intimate friends could guess at his passion. He has ever been thought a man of the strictest honour. Some reason unfathomable has caused this rupture—the hazard-table I believe is innocent of the charge laid against it. What must we conclude—that Louisa is in fault? No! it is impossible! Purity and virtue are impressed on her countenance—delicacy and modesty are marked in every word—in every turn. A devil in human shape, then, has worked it.—Lady Sommerville—ah! might she not have been too busy!—The mischief is done, and whether the evil perpetrator will ever stand confessed, Heaven only knows!—Clermont cannot, I suppose, be passive. I wonder he comes not over—he has been long expected.—Upon the whole, the unhappy girl has been ill used by Sir Charles, and the matter should be narrowly scrutinized.

I shall attend my Lady Arne, Louisa, and Julia, to an exceeding pretty seat my Lord has in the New Forest, where he waits to receive her Ladyship and their new charge. Lady Arne is all politeness: she treats Julia with the tenderness of a mother, and has besought her in the most earnest manner to spend some months with her and the afflicted Louisa. As soon as I see them settled at Wallingbrook-Abbey, I will return to Windsor, and, with your Ladyship's permission, proceed with you, my wife, and Almeria, to Hertfordshire, where business calls me at this moment.

I hope Caroline goes on well.—I do not think she has heartily forgiven me for a few *certain* incidents

that passed lately!—I beg you will be so good as to plead with her for me.

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Friday Night.

The painful tale is told! When Julia informed Lady Louisa that Sir George was much indisposed, she exclaimed, ‘Why this prelude?—Tell me—speak it at once—tell me that my uncle—my dear uncle no longer lives!—Your countenance—Julia, he is gone!—I have lost my only protector—my friend—my parent!’ My sister endeavoured to compose her, and exhorted her to reflect on the fortitude we are obliged to exert as christians on such trying occasions. Her affliction was very poignant. I will not excite your melancholy by entering into particulars; but the shock was too rough for her at such a time, though it had approached her under the gentlest form that could be given it. She had not received the intelligence two hours, when Lady Sommerville made her appearance? Julia and Lady Arne were administering consolation to the wretched girl at the moment. It was the first time she had deigned to visit Louisa’s apartment since her illness, and then she came fraught with baneful purposes. Her mourning-habit, added to the unexpected sight of her, affected Louisa violently, and she fainted. Happy was it that her senses forsook her when they did, else Lady Sommerville’s address must, I think, have deprived her of her reason for ever.

‘So, Lady Louisa!’ cried she, ‘you take fine state upon you after having murdered your unfortunate uncle!—Sir Charles Montague, Madam, has published your infamy;—and to the loss of your honour you certainly must attribute his desertion—I am left a miserable widow through your means——Have done with this hypocrisy, and listen to what I am about to say!’

Julia whispered an attendant to find me, and desire my immediate presence; then, taking Lady Sommerville by the arm, she led her to a remote part of the room, and there implored her with tears to spare her
unhappy

unhappy friend further anguish. I entered before she had an opportunity of replying, and without any ceremony lifted the fury in my arms, and, in spite of struggling, blows, a powerful quantity of virulence and abuse, conveyed her to another apartment. I reproached her with great harshness for her cruelty; and swore, if she offered to take the least measure to annoy the peace of Lady Louisa, during the short remainder of her abode at Sommerville-House, I would find an easy way of making her severely repent it. She looked terrified, and I left her. I wish to God we could go from hence! Every moment is an age that we stay under the roof of this female Dionysius.

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Saturday Morning

Contrary to our expectations, Louisa has had tolerable repose.—The physician pronounces his patient in a fair way. As I am so solicitous to quit this place, he thinks she might (with great caution) be removed on Monday morning, provided no change for the worse happens in the intermediate space. Lady Arne and my sister have made it a point never to leave her apartment together, fearful of another invasion from Lady Sommerville.

Adieu, dear Madam! I will no longer keep you anxious about Julia.—A few lines must accompany this letter to my wife. For the sake of expedition one of my servants shall be dispatched with both.—Embrace all-with you, for your Ladyship's

Most respectfully devoted,

And affectionate

PEMBERTON.

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T.

To Lady Dowager PEMBERTON.

Winchester.

WE have, dear Madam, by easy stages, removed Louisa from Sommerville-House to this place. She has borne travelling very well, and the variety of scenes serves to check her grief. With much difficulty we prevented a meeting between her and Lady Sommerville; they were both strenuous for it, from very different motives. Actual force was used to detain the latter from bursting into the presence of the invalid; and she often asked whether we meant to make a prisoner of her in *her own house*?—a favourite expression of the Lady's, which shews, that, had fortune not been *very, very* blind, she would not have been licensed to use it with propriety. Louisa, in the tenderest manner, besought our permission to take leave of her *unhappy* aunt, and to condole with her on their common loss. However ill-natured it might seem, it was held right to refuse her.

Julia is employed in offices of friendship. Her countenance wears a melancholy cast: whether it takes its colour from the afflictions of Louisa, or whether what she terms her own are predominant, I cannot determine—certain it is, her cheerfulness has entirely forsaken her. She is all gentleness—all solicitude to please—but appears totally deprived of every thing that borders on happiness. If the cause is as I suspect, I cannot but be provoked, that, through romantic ideas, she renders herself completely miserable. However, the perverseness of girls' dispositions is such, that to press one of them to think well of a man, whom in a moment of caprice she has vowed never to marry—let that man be ever so perfect—only rivets her resolution the faster, and she supposes she proves an heroic virtue in combating the opposition her inclination meets with. We must therefore say nothing of Suffolk yet. When Julia finds that we have ceased to be urgent on the subject, she may suppose he has given up the pursuit—her
vanity

vanity will be hurt—she will look back with regret on the allegiance she might have made—Osmond will be forgotten—and she will gladly put herself in the way of discovering whether Suffolk's passion has cooled.—then he will play his part—and we shall rejoice in his success. All this I hope a little time will effect!—I received a letter yesterday from the Duke. I am inexpressibly glad that he is again capable of writing.

To-morrow we proceed on our journey, and expect to reach Wallingbrook-Abbey on Saturday evening. I cannot refuse an invitation I have had from my Lord Arne, which was strengthened by pressing ones from my Lady, to spend at least a few days with them. I mean to bid adieu to the amiable pair early on Wednesday, and hope to have the honour of kissing your hand on that night. If any alteration should happen in Louisa, your Ladyship will be troubled with another letter from, dear Madam,

Your ever obedient,

And most affectionate

PEMBERTON.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Windsor.

WELL, my beloved girl! at length am I at liberty to write to you from the uninterrupted calm which presides over your situation. Your fears are no longer excited on our Louisa's account—You are no longer persecuted with the name of Suffolk, or his more odious addresses—You have escaped from Seymour—from Belfield—from all who laid siege to your heart unsuccessfully. You are now at leisure to find satisfaction in a letter from me, and to let me experience the joy of conversing with you, though at

the distance of many miles.—But, alas, Julia! my subjects must all run in the melancholy strain. I have no spirits now that you are gone from me. The romantic shades of Windsor—those shades we used to wander through with such exquisite delight, lost their charms in every one's opinion when they lost you. Our favourite haunts—the Hermitage—the Wilderness—the foot-path to the Pavilion—all, all wore a different aspect from that moment; and, when we viewed the change, flew from them with afflicted precipitation, discouraged from re-tracing them again.—Restore the pleasure you have robbed us of, my dear sister, by coming speedily to us. Bring with you Louisa Sydney, and we will join you in striving to render her once more cheerful.

In two days after my brother arrived here, he set off with my mother, his wife, and Almeria, for Hertfordshire. We are entirely deserted by all but Lady Caroline Denley, and Emily, who have promised to remain with us till we go to London for the winter. I am resolved not to quit Windsor, in spite of all the entreaties I received from the party that the Duke expects to entertain at his seat near Canterbury, the latter end of next month. My Lord refuses to go without me. I like none of the group, not I! I almost detest the Peer who has the honour of being my uncle; and I am not a jot more cordial towards his daughter, who styles herself my sister.—Good Heaven! how actuated by pique is human nature!—Lady Sophia cannot forgive a person, whose name it is needless to mention, for once saying *that she was very inferior in point of beauty to Lady Julia Herbert*. If she had as *faithful spies* in every company where a comparison between the two happens to be started, she would certainly *hate* and *despise* all the world in a short time! But I did not imagine her displeasure at such a trifle could have been attended with malice in the extreme degree it has. The old Duke's aversion to that same *unfortunate person* took its rise from a very severe sarcasm his father threw on him in a warm debate in the House of Lords many years ago—it was too

too keen—nay, perhaps, too just, ever to be pardoned from the heart, though their sentiments accorded so exactly with the *Stanhopean* system, that they kept up the forms of civility, whilst enmity towards each other cankered in their breasts. My good uncle has extended his resentment to the son, trying *as far as in him lies* to ‘visit the sins of the father upon the third and fourth generation,’ &c.—In conformity with this tenet, he snatched the opportunity of exercising his wrath, and cut off, by baleful advice, which had too great weight with Lady Pemberton, the happiness of an already persecuted amiable son. But most devoutly do I pray that his vindictive temper, his daughter’s vanity, and my brother’s pride, may be humbled by their being obliged to call that *very person* by the names of nephew and brother!——So far does my malice go, and no further——Yet God knows I am in fact only supplicating Providence to bestow an honour on them, that they are unworthy of! Keep up your spirits, dear Julia, and rely that all will be well. The blessed days you have experienced, must again take their turn, and the present gloom that predominates soon give way to a bright sun-shine. You want some of my courage. Did you possess what *my friends* I suppose are pleased to think I could spare, you would now be in France, the wife and companion of ————— your heart will supply the blank. I should be engaged in a glorious scene of altercation, were any of our *wise ones* to see this letter; but they are far enough away, and there is no fear of the post-boy’s mistaking Hertfordshire for Hampshire!

I have a piece of news to tell you, which is afflict-
ing——Col. Elliot no longer exists!—An express my Lord received this morning, mentions him amongst the killed in the last battle our forces had with the Americans. I know not whether Almeria will regret him—I think she must at least be sensibly shocked at hearing of his fate——Yet she has a happy method of reconciling misfortunes to her mind——She will say, that, though he had never seen her, his destiny would have been the same, since he could not refuse to obey

orders, and follow his regiment to the continent—— She will forget that his passion for her caused him to embrace the opportunity of signalizing himself with avidity, and most probably urged him on, in the hazardous enterprise which cost him his life.—— Poor Elliot!—I am one of the many who sincerely lament your untimely fall!—But to dwell on this theme cannot benefit him, and will only throw you and myself into the horrors.

You can but ill imagine how much on the rack of curiosity I am to learn the reason of Montague's extraordinary behaviour to Louisa—the one that Lady Sommerville alleges, is abominable, and can gain no credit with any of us.—By the bye, Julia, I must mention (take it which way you will) that I could not help laughing heartily at some of my brother's descriptions of that Lady—I should have enjoyed many of her freaks wonderfully! But to return,—Louisa, I think, cannot but form conjectures why he conducted himself so oddly. As appearances stand, he deserves to be hanged—I am sorry he has forfeited my good opinion—he is a smart, agreeable creature, and was a great favourite of mine.—I hope Louisa will not act like a fool, and pine to death on the desertion of a worthless animal!——Good God, what cheats the men are!—Was I not already tied to one of the deceitful wretches, I would revenge Louisa's disappointment, by forswearing the whole sex, and inculcate the position in every fair maiden's bosom that would listen to me. Suppose, my dear Julia, you were to undertake the cause! Hide yourself from mankind; never reflect on an individual amongst them but with contempt and aversion. Your coral lips will attract as numerous a sect as ever surrounded a Whitfield, a Madan, or a Westley. No old women, who, having tired the world and themselves with profligacy, and incapable of continuing their vicious course, take it in their heads to become pious, can dare to intrude on your community—No; beautiful, innocent damsels will compose your flock, all emulous to learn your precepts, and copy your example. How gloriously
will

will the wily arts of destructive man be subverted! How gloriously will you avenge on the whole race the misery that one of it has given to Louisa!—A charming opportunity, indeed, awaits you, of putting your friendship to the test.

I know I displease you by this levity, at the instant I exercise it with a design to make you smile—but, for Heaven's sake, let us have no more tears! I vow I never looked at you of late, but it worked the same effect on me, as an hour's abode in Trophonius's cave would have done. Crying, my dear girl, will tend to no other purpose than that of spoiling your beauty; and I cannot imagine you have given up all relish for viewing a fine image in your glass.—Be advised by me; and as you have found no advantage from incessant weeping, try now the efficacy of incessant laughing. I hated Lord Chesterfield from the minute I discovered that he prohibited that charming evolution of the features, and I have set it down in my idea that he had not a tooth in his head; or, if he had any, that they were so black, he thought it right to conceal them—therefore tried to render it the custom not to go beyond a smile.—‘Well!’ you cry, ‘and he succeeded—none but *Bores* laugh now.’—We will reverse the horrid fashion, Julia—none but *Bores* shall look grave.—Sure, we are of consequence enough to instruct people how to wear their features, as well as his Lordship!

* * * * *

Westbrook is arrived, my dearest sister. He left our *friend* in Paris with Mr. Montagne, from which place they intended to set off the next day for Switzerland. The Marquis, he says, is a picture of love and despondency; but his health is as good as a person's can be, who labours under distress of the acutest sort. I enclose a letter which Westbrook was bid to convey with great care to your hands. A lover will speak his own passion best; so I refer you to him. He was urgent

gent to come over to England with Sir James, and actually intended it, had he not received a letter from Lord Mortimer the day before they proposed quitting Paris on their return, which strongly recommended to him to remain abroad some months, till part of your family could be softened towards him, by the measures that should be taken for the purpose by the other part. With infinite reluctance he obeyed, as he will no doubt tell you; and made choice of one of the Cantons, as a place he could best lament so cruel a separation in.

Sir James met Mr. Norton at Calais: they came over in the same vessel, and, through the persuasions of Westbrook, he honoured us so far as to accompany him to Windsor. — Mr. Norton came to take possession of an estate left him by a cousin of his, else he did not mean to leave Italy so soon. We knew very little of him, which was to our disadvantage: few people improve more on acquaintance than he does. He is sensible and clever, and there is an ingenuity in his manner that I like extremely. I questioned him about Lord Clermont. He told me he is yet at Rome, and hinted, that a native of that capital detains him there so long: ‘However,’ added Mr. Norton, ‘he assured me, that I should see him in this kingdom in two months after my arrival.’

Embrace the amiable Louisa for me, and fail not to present my thanks to Lord and Lady Arne for their kindness to you. — Adieu, my dearest Julia! May you receive the joy that I wish you from the enclosed packet! prays,

Your ever affectionate

CAROLINE MORTIMER.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey.

WHAT a temptation have you thrown in my way! — Ah, Caroline, my dear sister, could you not have saved

saved me this conflict! Could you not have said, 'Lord Osmond has sent you a letter, but, knowing that your word is pledged not to read it, I spare you the torment of viewing the superscription, and withhold it?' I should have thanked your friendship, though it might have appeared a cruel one. But oh, Lady Mortimer! you either forget, or affect to do so, the restrictions I voluntarily laid myself under—Is it to try me?—Alas! I require no more trials, and should expect them last from you.—Enclosed the letter is returned to you—I dare not break the seal.—The mortification—that is too cold a word—the misery I endure on the occasion is inexpressible. Keep it till those better days you expect, and I despair of, come: then shall I look back with pleasure on this piece of self-denial, which my honour calls upon me to exert; and think my happiness without alloy, in the reflection of having by no act contrary to integrity attained the end of all my wishes. I forebode the evils that may follow from my not reading this dear letter—yes, Caroline, they crowd upon my imagination, and make me wretched. Osmond, my amiable Osmond, will naturally suppose that I have given him up; that, terrified by my mother's—my brother's anger, I have sponged him from my heart, and substituted in his room their minion Suffolk. He will despise my instability—such weakness must cure him—he will seek a more deserving mistress, and abandon his unfortunate Julia to the heart-breaking anguish of deploring his lost affections! This fate awaits me—yet I am resolved not to evade it, by any breach of promise, more especially one made to a parent.

Receive my thanks for the account (however short) you gave me of him. I rejoice that he is well; and though I wish him not to be quite easy at a distance from me, still I should be glad to know that his mind was more composed, and I no less dear to him than ever—Now, I must shortly expect to learn that his spirits are once more gay; but that I am abhorred by him as an example of infidelity—How am I to support it!—Lady Mortimer, no words can do justice to my

my love—judge then of the consequences—This subject draws so many tears on my paper as will scarcely leave a vestige of what I write—it is impossible to change it—I must dispatch the dangerous enticement which lies before me, and answer the other material paragraph of your letter to-morrow.—God bless my dearest sister!

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey.

YOU gave me an opportunity, my dear sister, of diffusing a ray of joy on the clouded brow of Louisa—she is pleased at hearing of Mr. Norton's return to England sooner than she expected.

I will satisfy your curiosity relative to Sir Charles Montague as far as I am able; though when I tell you all that Louisa and I know, you will find it as perplexing an affair as we do*. I enclose you the letter she received from Sir Charles Montague, at her own request: return it the next time that you write. I am in great hopes, that, when she recovers the effects of the shock that this cruel business has given, she will accustom her mind to reflect on the author of it with contempt. She reasons very sensibly upon it, and says, if Sir Charles broke off the match from any capricious motive, the loss of him *ought* not to be regretted:—if from listening to the tales that Mr. Melmoth (whom she suspects) might have fabricated for the purpose of interrupting their union, he is unworthy of a sigh for placing a confidence in him, and not suffering her to vindicate herself by laying his charge before her—At any rate he has behaved ungenerously; and she thinks

* Lady Julia here gives her sister an account of the manner in which Lady Louisa was taken ill, &c. much in the same way that Lady Anne gave it to Lord Pemberton.

it her duty, in every sense, to endeavour to hold him with indifference. She is ignorant, you may suppose, of Lady Sommerville's barbarous aspersions—they may make a trifling prejudice on vulgar souls against her; but, I am sure, they can have no effect on any of my family, who all know her worth. However, to convince you of the falsehood of what she said concerning Mr. Melmoth, I send you, by the special hand that conveys this to you, the key of my escritoir, which I left at Windsor. In it you will find all Louisa's letters. One of them, dated soon after your marriage, mentions her having discarded him, and in it is enclosed a letter from Mr. Melmoth, which accompanied back all those she had written to him. Her epistles will plainly demonstrate the rectitude and purity of her sentiments—sentiments incompatible with so licentious a conduct as the wicked Lady Sommerville represented.

Poor Colonel Elliot!—Dear Caroline, I cannot describe how concerned I am at his sad catastrophe!—My God! not ten months ago, we saw him enjoying the great career of the beau monde, little thinking how soon he would be snatched from the gay scene—And now where is he? What you say of Almeria is just; but it is better she should think in that manner for her own sake.

Lord and Lady Arne are indeed all kindness—they use every method to soothe the sorrows of Louisa—they tell her their happiness is wrapped in hers—that she is now their child, and the only command they expect her to obey is to be cheerful. I am often reproached by them for feeding her melancholy, by being so myself—Ah! Lady Mortimer, have I not cause for it?

This morning Lady Arne told us that we lead too solitary lives; and, if we had no objection, she would carry us to her house at Southampton, where we should see company, and have an opportunity of partaking in the amusements of the place. 'Besides,' added she, 'I want people to envy me the charge of two such girls!' Louisa assented immediately—it was death to me to think

think of it—Yet I have no idea of making others subscribe to my inclinations, when I can avoid it by giving up to theirs—But, my amiable Caroline! what will become of me, if through complaisance I must hurry into society and revels!—I cannot do it. Should I find myself so disagreeably circumstanced, I will seek refuge with you and my dear brother. When Louisa takes pleasure in assemblies, concerts, &c. &c. she can require my presence no longer—it will be an antidote to mirth! Do not imagine that I am insensible to your tenderness in wishing me with you—was I to follow my inclination, I should soon be in your arms; but my motive in this visit, was to endeavour to restore Louisa's bosom to its once tranquil state. To leave her just now, would render the task I have undertaken imperfect; and for her to leave Lady Arne, must seem ungrateful—however, I trust, I shall soon be at liberty to return.

It is impossible to mention the satisfaction I should have in seeing my excellent friend Sir James.—Say nothing of it to him—his good-nature will prompt him, if you do, to come down directly, and it may be thought, that he comes with dispatches from him who is dearer to me than life.

You must allow me to chide you for the freedom you used, in your letter, with many persons whom you ought to regard in a fairer light.

Embrace Lady Caroline and Emily for me: assure them of the grateful sense I entertain of their goodness, and convince Westbrook that I regard him warmly. Heaven preserve my dear sister! Say all that is tender to my Lord, for his and

Your truly affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Windsor.

I Have received both your letters—is it unkind of you, Julia, to accuse me of throwing painful trials in your way,

way, when you must know that my affection—my tenderness for you, would screen you from a moment's uneasiness, could I compass it by any method in the world. Your notions of honour are much to be admired; yet I believe there are few instances in life of such strict adherence to it, as you have exemplified on this late occasion. Far be it from me to encourage you to invade the limits you have marked—No, my dear girl, you are right.—I pity you—I pity Osmond—and hope heaven will reward the sacrifice you make to duty, by turning all to your mutual advantage.

I gave your first letter to my Lord—he perused it twice with great attention, and put it into his pocket. I asked him for it—

‘I must keep it, Caroline,’ cried he: ‘it may be of consequence!’

‘I entreated to know how?’

‘Be satisfied,’ replied he, ‘that I mean it should answer a particular point. For your sake—for Julia’s, enquire no further.’

Like a good wife I obeyed, convinced that whatever he intended to do with it, would turn out well.

I thank you for the pleasure you afforded me in reading Louisa’s packets—I required no such proof of her innocence.—I took the liberty of shewing them to Lord Mortimer, who often speaks of her, and says, he is persuaded that Sir Charles Montague has been imposed on by the contrivance of some deceitful wretch. I am delighted to think that she will exert a proper spirit, and despise so false a creature. We know not how we shall behave under particular afflictions till we are immersed in them. She says, in one of her letters, ‘Life without Sir Charles would be a torment, and could not long be endured.’ Since his desertion she has changed her idea, and very justly declares ‘he ought not to be regretted.’ A sensible woman will always act thus. When we discover our mistake, and find a man dispossessed of the good qualities which we blindly loved him for having—in the name of wonder what continues our attachment? We can no longer ascribe

cribe it to his merit certainly ! and any other motive is too low to occupy a refined breast.

Mr. Norton left us yesterday under a promise of returning to-morrow-night. He expected to have heard, on enquiring for Lady Louisa, that she was married, and expressed much wonder at our answers to his questions, which were only such as common fame authorized us to give. He asked where Sir Charles was ? My Lord replied, he believed in Wales. Mr. Norton looked very grave the remainder of the time we were together, and was remarkably silent. From what I have since discovered in a packet of Louisa's, I account for the alteration in him. Upon my word, Julia, I think, after all, the best thing she can do, is to marry Mr. Norton—Unless he turns out a most egregious cheat (which, after Montague's *gallant* behaviour, I would not swear against), the chances are a hundred to one that he would make her very happy—I have no doubt but he meditates proposing to her.

Westbrook went three days ago to join his regiment at ———. He has contrived so well as to engage Emily's promise to marry him in six weeks, or two months at farthest. Their nuptials will be celebrated here. Miss Edgcumb and her aunt still keep their kind resolution of staying with me till I go up to London, which we agreed last night should not be till the seventh of January. My Lord chuses to keep his Christmas in the country—I am glad that I shall not be obliged to carry him to town sooner ; and there will be full time enough to make preparations for Emily's introduction at court as Lady Westbrook, previous to the birth-day—God help your poor Caroline ! Directly on my arrival in the gay metropolis, I shall be immured like a prisoner, for some weeks. Sir James will be at Windsor as often as his duty from ——— can admit of it—this happens to be a busy time with him. I look with impatience for your return ; and, for her own sake as well as mine, wish Louisa may very shortly be able to spare you—I am sure it would be more agreeable to you to be here. Not one of the party but knows how you are situated,
and

and each would go through a great deal to effect your happiness and Lord Osmond's.

I must tell you it is actually asserted, that the Duke of Westmorland has made his addresses in form to Lady Henrietta Marchmont—Lord Davenport was charmed at it, and laid his commands for the first time of her life on his daughter to accept him as a lover. Her Ladyship did not much like such a one, and remonstrated—It was to no purpose—the father would have his way, and the union will soon take place. All my hope is, that she will break her husband's heart in a month after—she has spirit enough to do it thank heaven! When you reflect on what passed between the old monster and Sir Charles (which in answer to some question you asked the day before you left us, my Lord related to you,) can you blame me for praying that every thing bad may befall him? If you can, I hold such apathy, as you no doubt plume yourself upon, in contempt, and prize my warm active spirit, which is ever ready to execrate an enemy, and to 'wear in my heart's core,—aye, in my heart of heart,' a generous friend. The Marchmonts and his Grace are still at Brighthelmston.

Now that I am on the connubial topic, I must not fail to inform you, that Miss Pelham became the wife of Colonel Melvin last week; she is an amiable young woman, and deserves to be happy.—I tremble for the conduct of Charlotte Pelham, now that she is left to herself—The mother is so silly, so vain, and so indolent!—She can regard nothing but her person—and the unfortunate girl, with strong passions, has not a grain of discretion to save her from the dire effects of yielding to them.

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Friday Night.

Mr. Norton is here, and in close conference with my Lord. I take it, some important business relative to Louisa is transacting between them. We have discovered, by the letter I have already alluded to, the strict confidence

confidence she ever placed in him, and I suppose my Lord judges it right to lay before him the scandalous lies that have been propagated by Lady Sommerville. He is Louisa's sincere friend as well as lover—he will take proper steps on the occasion, which his intimacy with Lord Clermont warrants—My Lord enters—I hope he will enable me to tell you the tenor of their discourse!

* * * * *

Heavens! Julia, what a request has he made!—Good God, I know not what to do!—He entreats me to give him all Louisa's letters for Mr. Norton's perusal—He says that they may be the means of restoring her to happiness—that you can have no objection, when you make that consideration. He urges many arguments that appear forcible—but that may be from my thinking him incapable of doing wrong!—I have begged ten minutes to ponder on the matter—I know not yet what to determine, and the time is nearly elapsed—Mortimer!—my dear husband!—how perplexed a situation have you rendered mine!

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Julia, I am afraid to inform you that he has got them!—You will chide—you will think me ungenerous—your secrets as well as Louisa's, you will say, are betrayed!—Ah, my dear sister, not so!—No creature will see them but he who is a real friend to both.—If I have erred, reflect on the motive which biassed me, and pardon me. The flutter my spirits are thrown into by this unexpected demand, quite discomposes me—I will retire to bed.

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Saturday

Saturday Morning.

Lord Mortimer, my dear sister, has acquainted me with a circumstance I never had suspicion of before. He consents to my imparting it to you, on condition that you do not reveal a syllable of the affair to Louisa, till he gives you leave.

He has a packet in his possession for Lord Osmond from Sir Charles Montague, with a letter to himself commissioning him to read the former. That packet discovers to us the perfidy which was practised against your friend.—Montague was so easily duped by a silly woman, that I think he deserves to be punished,—and yet more for having no confidence in Louisa Sydney. The packet, with my Lord's letter from Sir Charles *, shall be sent to you by one of our servants, who shall also be the bearer of this.

You will be surprised at my Lord's detaining the packet so long from the Marquis—I was—and asked him the cause? He replied in these words:

' You see it was left at my option to with-hold it as long as I thought proper—Lord Osmond was in no condition for the first few weeks after his departure, to have his sorrows aggravated—I, therefore, in a letter to him, warned him not to be astonished at Montague's silence, as he was occupied in attending Lord Beaumont from place to place, who had lately had a severe illness, and continual travelling was prescribed by his physicians as the only remedy to keep off another attack, which would in all probability be fatal—This reason, and Sir George Sommerville's death, I added, obliged him to postpone his marriage; and that he had commissioned me, in his stead, to become his Lordship's correspondent, as I could give him better information respecting Julia. I told him that Louisa had been indisposed, and that Julia had been with her at Lady Arne's, to whose house she had been carried on her uncle's decease.

* See Sir Charles Montague's letter to Lord Osmond, in this Volume, page 52, and his letter to Lord Mortimer, page 111.

' Soon

‘ Soon after my writing in this manner, Pemberton returned from Hampshire, and, by his account of what passed at Sommerville-House, I plainly discovered the whole mischievous plot, and then kept Sir Charles’s packet with a motive of shewing it to Lord Clermont, who was every day expected to arrive in this kingdom. I could not properly stir in the affair, having no connection, and very little acquaintance with Lady Louisa. To have written Montague all that Pemberton related to me of Lady Sommerville’s calumny might not have answered—he was liable, I found, to be misled in a case where he was so nice—Lady Sommerville would, on his application to her, be artful enough to make things worse—and, if he addressed Louisa on the subject, it was natural to suppose she would bid him never see her more. I therefore remained quiet, hoping Clermont would manage matters in such a way, as to punish Lady Sommerville, and to facilitate his sister’s and Montague’s happiness.

I was at length wearied with waiting—I resolved to send Osmond his packet, and the particulars I had gathered of the story; apprehending at the same time, that he would gladly catch at the plea of serving his friend to come over to England. I was about to execute this intention, when you most fortunately gave me the perusal of Louisa’s letters. I dropped my purpose, and impatiently looked for Mr. Norton’s return to Windsor, who, I found, was as proper a person to engage in the business, as any I could have wished for.’

Mr. Norton and my Lord spent great part of last night in consulting on the most probable means to recover Sir Charles from his error. Mortimer communicated to him every light he could give. He laid before him Montague’s letters—Louisa Sydney’s to you—and Mr. Melmoth’s farewell one to her. He repeated to him the conversations my brother had held with Lady Sommerville; and ventured to hint a suspicion of her being attached herself to Sir Charles. Mr. Norton told my Lord, that it was his resolution to set off in the morning for Sommerville-House, and collect all the circumstances he could from the Lady of that mansion concerning

concerning the intrigue that she declares existed between Melmoth and Louisa. From thence he will go to Melmoth's, and desire in Lord Clermont's name, to have satisfaction for the insolence that Lady Sommerville accuses him of being guilty of towards his sister. If he denies the imputation, he will confront him with Lady Sommerville, and settle the matter, he trusts, happily; if he dares to coincide in her infamous tale, he must either give incontrovertible proofs of the truth of it, or answer for the blemish cast on Louisa's honour with his life. From this plan you will readily suppose that Mr. Norton means to put himself in the way of much danger, and of course that it is absolutely necessary our friend should not have a distant suspicion of what passes, till the whole affair is finished.—Mr. Norton left Windfor early this morning, and has carried with him your letters; but, at my Lord's desire, he will make no use of them, till he can be informed whether he has your leave to do so.

Julia waits for his dispatches—you must not detain him long, my dear Julia, as your answer is material in the grand business that the excellent Mr. Norton is engaged in, and as I am impatient to know that you are not angry with me for the measure I have taken. Farewel, my amiable girl. Believe me always

Yours affectionately,

CAROLINE MORTIMER.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey.

I AM miserable, my dear sister, at your suffering the least disquiet in acting for me as you would for yourself—If the letters are to be of advantage to Louisa, surely I cannot have a wish but to employ them for the purpose! Rest satisfied, then, in knowing, that, had I been on the spot, I should have given them
up

up immediately.—As to my secrets being discovered—I care not—I am indifferent who is acquainted with my attachment to Lord Osmond—and that is the only secret you can allude to—Had I important ones that concerned myself alone, and such as would pain me to reveal—I hope I should not hesitate to sacrifice them, to relieve an unfortunate character from the obloquy cast on it.

Your servant will leave Wallingbrook-Abbey by to-morrow's dawn.—I have had no opportunity of reading Sir Charles's packet—I received it in the presence of Louisa, and am glad that chance directed me not to open it till I had perused your letter—the sight of Montague's writing would have affected her—I will devote the present moments to it.

* * * * *

Unmerciful Lady Sommerville!—Ah, my God, is it in nature for a woman to own such principles! I compassionate Sir Charles extremely—his faults proceeded from too great diffidence of himself, and over-much delicacy in avoiding the sight of a mistress whom he thought he was hateful to.—We cannot entertain a doubt of his affections for Louisa—and from hence I avow myself his advocate—a strenuous one he shall find me, when occasion ripens for it.

But, my dear Lady Mortimer, I am terrified about Mr. Norton!—If a *rencontre* ensues, and his life becomes the victim of perpetrated iniquity, how dreadful will it be.—Heaven assist me!—I tremble at the word *rencontre*!—Ah, may I never hear of another!

Farewel, my much-loved friend,—my dearest sister! Each day adds new lustre to Lord Mortimer's character—he is continually engaged in some scheme to benefit his fellow-creatures—How happy are you!—That you may be long so in each other, is the ardent prayer of

Your

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lord MORTIMER.

Petersfield.

YOU are no doubt, my Lord, very impatient to receive a letter from me—I am equally so, to convince your Lordship, that I have not been inactive in the measures I had the honour of consulting you upon before I left Windsor. Your friendship, my Lord, for Lady Louisa Sydney, which you say she has a right to from her oppressed state—mine also for her, which proceeds from many other motives, makes her cause an interesting one to both—and to re-establish her good name is our mutual wish.

On my entering Sommerville-House, I was shewn into an apartment that was full of company. Lady Sommerville received me very graciously, and pressed me to pass the evening there. I complied, and waited with eagerness till she was alone. As soon as that happened, I affected a surprise at Louisa's absence. This brought on the recapitulation I sought for; and she by no means spared her *dear, lamented* Sir George's niece. I dwelled on the part of her history relating to Melmoth.

'For Heaven's sake,' cried I, 'is it possible that I could have been so exceedingly mistaken in this girl's morals!—From any lips but yours, Lady Sommerville, it would cost me some pains to acquire faith enough to credit what I have heard—But prithee give me an instance of her dissoluteness!'

'Pshaw!' replied she, 'were I to mention the many that I have it in my power to recite, you would be heartily tired of the disgusting subject—In one word, she is abandoned!'

'And was it Mr. Melmoth who seduced her?' demanded I.

'It is difficult to say which party was seduced,' answered she:—'however, I am charitable enough to hope, that she might be innocent now, but for the artifices he used to corrupt her.'

In this way she continued to speak the remainder of the time we were together. On my getting up to depart, she apologized for not offering me a bed in her house; but *flattered herself I would excuse it—the world was censorious, and it behoved her (who was a very young woman) to act with even more discretion than females of virtue usually practise.* I thanked her, and replied, that, foreseeing her delicate scruples, I had ordered an apartment at this inn for the night. She insisted on my breakfasting with her the next morning. I assented, and took my leave.

When I attended her invitation, she of her own accord renewed the topic we had been upon the preceding evening.

‘I hope, Mr. Norton,’ said she, ‘you are now instructed to be upon your guard against the dissimulation which the bad part of my sex can assume when they please. Under the feigned blush of modesty, you see they conceal brutal inclinations. I have suspected, since you left me, that you were ensnared by Lady Louisa’s wiles—surely you no longer love her!’

‘It is impossible, Madam,’ cried I, ‘to love the object we have ceased to respect—Such a discovery as yours would cure the strongest passion that ever inhabited a mortal bosom!’

‘I am glad to hear you speak so sensibly,’ returned she; ‘and now I will reveal an instance of her ignominy.’

One morning I left my bed earlier than common, and, going through a passage contiguous to Lady Louisa’s apartment, I saw a man coming out of it, whom I directly knew to be Mr. Melmoth. He retired back on seeing me, thinking he had escaped my notice. I was a good deal flustered, and hastily returned to my dressing-room. My woman was alarmed at the paleness of my countenance, and enquired the cause of it—I thoughtlessly told her. ‘Oh, my Lady,’ she exclaimed, ‘there is nothing extraordinary in that—you may see him every morning, at the same hour, leave Lady Louisa’s bed-chamber, if your Ladyship will get up time enough for it!’ I de-

fired her to go in, and search every corner of Lady Louisa's apartments—to say she saw him enter them, and would not leave the place without beholding him. I charged her, when Mr. Melmoth appeared, to tell him that she was shocked at such scandalous proceedings, and determined, if ever he came near the house again, to make me acquainted with the whole. Walker obeyed my orders very faithfully. Mr. Melmoth lay concealed, she suspected, in an unfrequented closet. Lady Louisa and her vile French woman were clamorous at her intrusion—they would not consent to her approaching the closet—but luckily she proved too strong for both, and, rushing by them, forced it open, just as Mr. Melmoth was endeavouring to make his way out through a window. Perceiving that he was known, he thought it needless to risk his life by so precipitate a retreat, and imagined a bribe might answer his purpose much better—He offered Walker twenty guineas, which she refused; but told Louisa and Clairon, (who were metamorphosed from furies into Niobes,) that she should be more tender of their reputations than they were themselves, in preventing Mr. Melmoth from being caught again in such a place—and that her secrecy on the past shameful scene might be depended on, provided they held no further communication with him. Many gratifications were pressed upon her by all parties—She would accept of none—and, after seeing Mr. Melmoth out of the house, she returned to tell me the success of her embassy.

I had many conflicts whether or not I should inform Sir George of what had happened; but the apprehension of losing him, from the effect such a horrid affair must produce on his weak frame, kept me silent.

Lady Louisa, on being restricted from any intercourse, with Mr. Melmoth, grew wonderfully dejected—I found that she used means to recal him; but he, judging the enterprize would be of danger to him, and, I believe, glad to the soul of an excuse to forsake her, disregarded her appointments—She al-

most pined to death——Lady Arne carried her to Southampton—She saw Sir Charles Montague——she inveigled him by her apparent modesty to make love to her—I interrupted her.

—‘ And to allow him favours also!—oh abominable!’

‘ I cannot say for a fact, Mr. Norton, that she has been his mistress—I had no testimony of it—but there was time and opportunity for it enough.’

Your Lordship will take notice how difficult it is for a false narrator to preserve consistency—the night before, Lady Sommerville had, in the beginning of our conversation, absolutely pronounced Louisa guilty with Montague—Perhaps, after I was gone, she recollected the intimacy that had subsisted between Sir Charles and me, and supposed the matter would be talked over by us both when we met. However, this reflection did not occur to me then.

‘ You told me last night, Madam,—

‘ What I now repeat, Sir, that I actually do imagine that she was as compliant to Sir Charles’s wishes, as she was to Mr. Melmoth’s, though I have not as good authority for it. The reason that Sir Charles gave my husband for avoiding the marriage broke his heart.’

‘ Pray let me know it, Madam!’

‘ Indeed, I am not exactly acquainted with it.—Sir George was too ill to think of shewing me the letter, or asking my opinion—which he never failed doing before, on the most trifling occasion.—Poor Sir George was very partial to me—he had a better notion of my judgment than it deserved!’

I am afraid, my Lord, that I shall suffer in your Lordship’s idea, from the confession I am going to make—but, notwithstanding the proofs I saw and heard of Lady Sommerville’s treacherousness, I had so much fallibility about me, as to be less fixed in my belief of Louisa’s innocence.—The mention she made of Melmoth’s having been detected in her apartments, wore, from her method of telling it, a plausible appearance——her manner seemed artless——and what staggered

staggered me more than all, was, her knowing that Mr. Melmoth lived at no great distance from Sommersville-House—that I was familiar with him, and had it at my option to interrogate him concerning the affair.—She acknowledged to Lord Pemberton that she had burnt Sir Charles's letter—to me, that she had never seen it—how was that to be reconciled?—Why, my weak imagination settled it thus—that she might not have chosen to give an instance to his Lordship of Louisa's criminality with Melmoth, lest he should have arraigned her for concealing the matter from Sir George; and she therefore held it more eligible to rest the charge against her honour on Montague's letter—she owned to me the truth, as to a person who was of little consequence, and whose good opinion it was not material for her to conciliate—I thought her undisguised in saying she had no other ground than supposition for Louisa's having been infamous with Sir Charles, which originated from a conviction of her having lost her virtue to Mr. Melmoth—I trembled at the possibility that our conjectures of Lady Sommerville were mistaken ones—and that an honest motive might have stimulated her writing to Montague, to prevent his marrying nothing better than a prostitute.

There are moments, my Lord, when the mind is liable to imbecillity—mine was in that state just then—what I have written entered it at the time, and overwhelms me now with confusion, for having given admission to ideas so disparaging to a woman who is 'as chaste as unsunn'd snow.'

'Does Mrs. Walker live with you still, Madam?'

'Yes, she does—She is a woman of such principle—such benevolence—and, in short, so excellent a creature, that I would not part with her for worlds.'

When I left Sommersville-House, I was really in a perplexed situation—If Louisa, thought I, is thus lost, why give myself further trouble about her? She deserves to feel every punishment in life!—But yet, why could I not have heard this relation last night? I begged one proof of Lady Louisa's profligateness—

Lady Sommerville answered me in general, that she had it in her power to give several.—This morning she waited not to be again asked—she unfolded to me a horrible anecdote that shewed her in a damn'd light. Might not she and Mrs. Walker have contrived the story between them? No doubt of it!—I will go through the matter, and either clear injured innocence, or expose an artful girl habituated to vice.

I went to Mr. Melmoth's house—I found him alone. Never did I behold such a change in a human appearance!—He looked the spectre of the man I once knew by his name—his countenance wore a pallid hue—a difficulty of respiration molested him; a frequent hectic cough prevented his conversing with ease.

'You see in me, Norton,' cried he, after our salutations were over, 'the cursed effects of a libertine life. I am making a rapid progress out of a world, whose pleasures I valued far too highly; and I have this reflection for my chastisement, that, was I to begin the career of life again, with the knowledge I now have, I would prefer the state of a handicraftsman to that of any other which might throw me into the vicious way I have trod. I pursued the phantom Pleasure—in every shape she assumed I pursued—but never overtook her!'

I expressed my concern at finding him so much indisposed; and told him, there was, perhaps, leisure enough for him to commence a new road, which would assuredly bring him to happiness.

'In another world you must mean, Norton,' replied he: 'my thread is just spun out—I have neither time nor spirits to make further trials here.'

'I am sorry, Melmoth,' cried I, 'for the business I am obliged to enter upon—which I sincerely wish may not lay me under the necessity of cutting that thread in a few hours—or add to your present horror by charging your conscience with my death!'

He looked amazed—'What do you mean, Mr. Norton?'

'That

‘That Lady Louisa Sydney’s character has been basely aspersed. Lady Sommerville gives out that you seduced her—she propagates things of her that I am convinced are false.’—

‘Aye, falser than hell! if they tend to what you have already said.—You have no doubts of my courage, Mr. Norton—in your presence it has been tried—yet let me assure you, that, in this cause, no fighting shall ensue—Louisa Sydney—the cruel Louisa! I have always found a paragon of virtue; and, was all the universe combined in depreciating her chastity, I would still believe it inviolate.—But give me the particulars alleged against her ingenuously.’

I did so. He attended with great coolness to me, and, when I had finished, replied,

‘You have been the reciprocal friend of Lady Louisa and me—at least I ever thought so!—You may remember how vehemently I regretted the loss of her.—She was right in reserving herself for a better man.—Dissipated, rakish, as I have been, I cannot tax my conscience with a single act of dishonour towards any one; and should scarcely begin by using the slightest means to prevent her union with the man of her choice——much further from my principles would it be to cast a blemish on her reputation. Lady Sommerville would not have been so daring in her allegation, did she not think that I was gone abroad, and that you would have no opportunity of clearing the matter. I took leave of her and the rest of my neighbours last week, with an intent to quit England. When I arrived at Dover, I was taken extremely ill, and, had I embarked, must have expired before I could reach Calais. I remained at Dover a few days, and then, finding myself better, and thinking that the little time I had to live, would be spent more comfortably at my own dwelling, than in travelling under innumerable disadvantages through a foreign country, I changed my purpose, and set out on my return home, which I reached last night. Lady Sommerville, Sir, has been ever envious of Louisa——she detests her for being much handsomer,

more accomplished, and better descended than herself.'—

'She loves Sir Charles, I dare say,' exclaimed I; 'and is weak enough to imagine she may supplant Lady Louisa.'

'Nothing so probable,' returned Melmoth; 'and a letter I will shew you, must rivet your conjecture. I received it from Lady Sommerville, soon after Lady Louisa's arrival from Southampton.'

He went out, and immediately came back with the following lines in his hand, which he presented to me.

TO GEORGE MELMOTH, *Esq.*

Is it possible that you can quietly yield Louisa Sydney to Sir Charles Montague? If you can, I must think you never loved her.—For shame, Melmoth!—Reflect what transports you felt when you expected to call her yours—reflect what transports await him, who, without your interference, will shortly become her envied bridegroom. Was I you, my passion should urge me to do something to interrupt his felicity. You are but lately discarded, and it is out of the question to suppose another mistress already possesses your heart.—Fighting is not the method I would take—no, that can never answer your purpose.—Give me encouragement, by saying you will follow my advice, and I will strike out a glorious plan that shall ensure her yours. I think you deserving of her, and wish you happy. Farewel!

M. SOMMERVILLE.

I begged to know what was his answer to this curious scroll?

'None,' he replied; 'I held her in too contemptible a light to make any; and her suspecting me to be a villain, should have been properly chastised, but for her sex, which screened her from my resentment.'

'I am glad, my dear Melmoth,' cried I, 'that you did not destroy this letter—it may be of essential service to Louisa, whom I am sure you are so generous as to desire to see happy with Montague!'

'Emaciated—

‘Emaciated—dispirited as I am,’ answered he, ‘barbarous as she has been, Mr. Norton—I still love her—I therefore cannot desire to behold her happiness with another—to hear of it I do———But come, my heart is on the wing to repair the injuries she has received——What is to be done?’

‘Accompany me to Sommerville-House, and there confront the diabolical author of those injuries.’

‘With all my soul—your chaise waits—let us lose no time.’

We got into it, and drove to Sommerville-House. Lady Sommerville, I believe, did not expect me——however, she ran out with great pleasure to meet me in the hall—but what pen can adequately describe the change her countenance underwent at seeing Melmoth follow me! She trembled, and was ready to faint—she turned from us to go into a parlour—we pursued her steps unbidden, and, seating ourselves near her, observed the transition of her passions. After a while, she became more composed, and thought it her *dernier ressort* to brave us by effrontery.

‘Well, Mr. Melmoth,’ said she, ‘I will confess that I was a good deal shocked at seeing you so unexpectedly—I am afraid you have been much worse since you left Hampshire.—You are surprisingly altered within a few days.—My spirits are weak—and no wonder after going through such affliction!—The least alarm throws me into a pitiable condition.’

‘For the love of Heaven, Madam,’ exclaimed he, ‘let us have none of this cursed hypocrisy!—Your terror of being detected in malicious falsehood has reduced you to this condition—not concern for my health.’

‘You astonish me, Sir, by your brutality!—What terror can I possibly have?—what falsehood do you speak of?’

‘Are you not afraid that your perfidy will be unravelled?——Louisa Sydney!—at that name you must shudder.’

‘I scorn your words, Sir!—Never presume to enter this house again!’—and she hastened towards the door.

door. He prevented her retiring, and led her back to her place.

‘Not so, my *excellent* Lady Sommerville!—Come, repeat to me what you have done to Mr. Norton—repeat that Lady Louisa is destitute of virtue—that I seduced her!’

‘I never said you seduced her—the charge is false—she seduced you—I have neither inclination nor leisure to trouble myself with either her or your affairs—Unhand me, Sir!’

‘But why not indulge me with a repetition of the marvellous incidents that have entertained so many from your lips?—Still silent!—nay, this rage suffices nothing.—Well then, Norton, I call on you, since Lady Sommerville is dumb on the sudden, to tell every syllable she has uttered against the honour of Lady Louisa Sydney—By heaven and earth, Madam, you shall not stir!’ and throwing his arm round her waist, he held her on her seat—he fixed his eyes with sternness on her face, and continued to do so during the whole narration that I gave, exactly in the way she had delivered it to me. When I ended, he exclaimed,

‘Now, Lady Sommerville, I conjure you, by the presence of that God to whom you must render a strict account at the last dreadful day, to declare whether there is a word of truth in all this?’

‘It is all truth!’ replied she.

‘Ha!—perjury you add to your other crimes, Madam, do you?—Have a care!—Our legislature has provided a severe punishment for that sort of wickedness—it may shock your delicacy even to hear it named, and will cause you to repent more than once of your evil conduct, since the apprehension of hereafter has no effect on you—depend I will put the law in force.’

‘I admire your assurance, Sir, in talking so religiously, who have ever turned your back upon that God you solemnly adjure me by!—I have always observed his commandments—you never have—Who is most likely to be accused of perjury—I, in declaring your criminality

WHAT YOU WILL. 179

criminality with Louisa Sydney—or you, in denying it with a thousand oaths?”

‘Under a mask of sanctity, Madam, you conceal vices, that libertine as I have been (remember I am no longer one), I would not have committed to gain my heart’s dearest treasure—Read your own writing, and let it make you blush with shame, with remorse.’—She attempted to tear it; but I rescued it from her fury—

‘Well,’ said she, and what is there in that writing to speak against me?—I endeavoured to destroy it, that innocent words might not be perverted to a mischievous sense—I thought better of you than you deserved—had you chosen it—I would have argued with Lady Louisa.’—

‘No more incongruity, Lady Sommerville,’ cried I: ‘does your writing in such a style to Melmoth correspond with what you told me? If you believed him tired of her favours, how could you have expected that he would make her his wife?’

‘I supposed him a man of honour.’

‘Had you known of his intimacy with your niece, would your letter have been worded in these terms?’

‘Certainly! because it was my plan to seem ignorant to him, of what I was but too well informed!’

‘Then allow me to ask, if Lady Louisa was so miserable at his desertion, why argue with her? Sure, after what had passed, she would have more than met him half way!’

‘Lady Louisa, Sir, appeared so well pleased with her new lover, that I imagined it would not be her choice to part with him for her former one—I judged it proper to hinder the consequences that I foresaw from Sir Charles’s assiduity, and thought I acted the christian’s part, in attempting to get her married to the man with whom she had held a criminal commerce; and, to say the truth, Sir Charles Montague merited a better fate, than to marry Mr. Melmoth’s cast-off mistress!—To have you both, Gentlemen, determined against all I say, is hard!—You are resolved to make out Louisa innocent—you wish it, Mr. Norton—and Melmoth (from what motive he could best tell) thinks

thinks it safest to do so—but he knows in his soul that she is guilty—I am very ill-treated—yet I may find a protector to avenge such insults!’

She burst into tears—her grief softened me—again my doubts returned—I began to fancy I discovered confusion in Melmoth’s face—I walked backwards and forwards in great agitation—Melmoth followed me.

‘I see, Mr. Norton, that this vile woman’s artifice succeeds; but, as I hope to be forgiven in my last moments—I am innocent of her accusation!’

‘Then, Mr. Melmoth,’ exclaimed she, ‘you will die as you have lived, under the wrath of God!—To convince you, Mr. Norton, once for all, that you have not been deceived, Walker shall appear—her evidence will satisfy you.’

Pleasure sparkled in her eyes from the instant that she suspected me of giving credit to what she affirmed—she tripped to the bell with an assured air, and ringing it three distinct times, in as many seconds Mrs. Walker entered.

‘I want you, my good Walker,’ said the Lady, ‘to attest the truth of what I have been telling Mr. Norton concerning Lady Louisa Sydney—You know her to be an infamous creature.’

‘You are rather hasty, Madam—you anticipate Mrs. Walker,’ cried Melmoth, ‘and instruct her in what she should say—I fear she is already too well prepared!—Mr. Norton, to you it belongs to question this woman.’

‘I must beg of you, Mrs. Walker,’ said I, ‘to let me know all that you are acquainted with respecting Lady Louisa Sydney—have the rectitude of a Christian before your eyes, and then speak fairly.’

‘Aye, Walker,’ exclaimed Lady Sommerville; ‘speak openly all you have to allege against her, and be apprehensive of nothing!’

‘Your Ladyship may depend,’ returned the woman, ‘that no threats—no low-minded fear of consequences to myself, accruing from what I utter, shall stimulate me to hide any thing of her that it is in my power to disclose.’

‘That

‘That is right, my worthy creature!—My protection you shall always have, let these gentlemen do what they will.’

‘Is not this downright bribery?’ demanded Melmoth? ‘Am I to be held dishonourable, Mr. Norton, from the evidence of a mercenary wretch?’

Mrs. Walker affected not to hear him.

‘And now, my Lady,’ cried she, ‘I shall obey Mr. Norton:—Were I, Sir, at the great tribunal, to which we must all come, I could not have my heart more thoroughly laid open, than it shall be now to you.’

‘If modesty—if virtue daily practised, in the fullest extent of the word, deserve the epithet of infamous—I certainly do not know a more infamous creature in the world than Lady Louisa Sydney—if they deserve a contrary phrase, it is assuredly hers! The most discreet conduct, from the moment I first saw her, to the last of her residence in this house, guided all her actions—she never gave the slightest room for the breath of slander to approach her—unjust calumny there is no shield can protect us from!’

‘Impertinent wretch!’ vociferated her Lady: ‘do you dare thus change your note after’—

‘After the costly presents I have received not to alter it?—Alas, Madam, yes!—I waited for a favourable moment to unravel to Sir Charles Montague the history that your Ladyship obliged me to bear a part in—I undertook to help your stratagem, lest you should employ a low, venal creature, who, influenced by the promises you made, might under your direction have effectually destroyed the character of one of the sweetest Ladies breathing—To explain it to Sir Charles Montague’s, or Lady Louisa’s friends, will do as well.

‘My Lady, gentlemen, before Sir George’s death, often hinted to me her dislike to his niece. She said, the good education my father (who was a clergyman) gave me, placed me above the standard of servants; and as she believed me faithful, I should have her confidence. She told me, that Sir Charles Montague was
a man

a man beloved by herself, and she would leave no arts untried to break his attachment to Lady Louisa, mentioning, at the same time, that, was her husband underground, she had no doubt of securing him. About three months ago, she wrote to Sir Charles. Upon the receipt of her letter, he withdrew his addresses from Lady Louisa—the reason he ascribed for it, will be seen in this letter from him to Sir George *, which my Lady, the very morning he died, took from his waistcoat pocket in my presence.

‘Walker,’ said she, ‘we must destroy this paper—it will mar the scheme I have in view of blasting Louisa’s fame—read it—and afterwards do not fail to burn it—My first plot has been attended with double success—I did not dare to hope it would have so happily rid me of this old fright, as well as Louisa of her charming lover—I have encouragement enough surely to go on scheming, till I attain the summit I aim at!’

‘The acquisition of this letter, gentlemen, delighted me exceedingly, as it would be the best means of defeating my Lady’s cruel purpose relative to Lady Louisa—a purpose she adopted with this motive, that none of her friends might receive or take notice of her, and of course she would not be in the way of Sir Charles, as explanations between them was what my Lady most dreaded.

‘To encourage my good behaviour, as she called it, she gave me this bank-bill of a hundred pounds, and this promissory note of a thousand, payable on Sir Charles’s first visit as a lover. I give them both up to you, Mr. Norton, either to return them to my Lady this minute, or to make any use of them that you think may be of advantage to Lady Louisa.’

‘The hundred pounds, Mrs. Walker,’ cried I, ‘we will restore to Lady Sommerville—the note I will keep for Montague’s perusal, and then send it to the honourable person who drew it, to dispose of as she pleases—the letter I will preserve to shew Lady Arne, and Lord Pemberton: the former was told, it

* See p. 59 of this vol.

was dictated in far different terms; the other, that her own pretty fingers had committed it to the flames.'

'Aye, Sir, so they were!—My Lady mentioned to me, that Lord Pemberton's fine penetrating eyes had very nearly made her betray herself.—Last night, whilst I undressed her, she fabricated the story that was related of you this morning, Mr. Melmoth: it was frequently recited to me, that I might (in case I was called for) corroborate what she said, and add other things that she instructed me to deliver. Her invention was not ready enough last night for Mr. Norton's question; and, that you might have an *instance of Lady Louisa's licentiousness* before you left Hampshire, Sir, you were invited to breakfast. Often did my Lady rejoice, that fortune had befriended her in removing Mr. Melmoth out of the kingdom; and exulted at the little probability there was of your detecting the imposition.

'I shall only add on this subject, that Lady Louisa is idolized by every servant in the family—they all hold her so dear, as to undertake to serve her in any way however dangerous. I had no opportunity of speaking apart to Lord Pemberton or the Ladies, as I was continually in attendance on my Lady—besides, things were not ripe for a disclosure—I had not then the promissory note, which is the chief proof against her Ladyship.

'And now, gentlemen, that I have exculpated the innocent, it is but justice to expose the guilty—My Lady is that very abandoned person you have heard her call her niece. During the last six months of Sir George's life, she kept up a criminal commerce with Mr. Western, and has perhaps been enabled by a like behaviour of her own to——my Lady faints!—I am sorry for the part I am obliged to perform!'

We carried her into the air, and with the help of volatiles and drops she revived—but oh! what execrations did she not pour upon Mrs. Walker! She accused her of falsehood in what she dared to say of Mr. Western; defied mankind to taint her fair name, and ran on unmercifully, till Mrs. Walker begged us to believe that

that she spoke nothing but the fact, as Lady Louisa's woman, Clairon, had it at her option to testify. I told Lady Sommerville, it was nothing to me how she conducted herself—that we were satisfied of all we wanted to know. Melmoth interrupted me—

‘No, Norton! I will learn more of the affair—she deserves the utmost disgrace, and to be mortified in the highest degree—What does Clairon know of her, Mrs. Walker?’

‘Stop,’ cried I, ‘we already are acquainted with enough to ruin this Lady in the opinion of everyone—however, unless she consents this minute to give me an acknowledgment in writing that all she has said of Lady Louisa, as well as what she wrote to Sir Charles, is false, we will hear what Mrs. Walker is enabled to reveal, and make it as publick as the air.’

‘I am rendered desperate, and care not what I do,’ exclaimed Lady Sommerville—‘Yes, I will write what you please—I am tormented to death!—Get out of my sight, you mean—ingrateful hireling!’ turning to Mrs. Walker, who waited not for a repetition of the command. ‘It is hard, Mr. Norton, to be aspersed unjustly!’

‘You did not consider that, Madam,’ said Melmoth, ‘when you so unfeelingly injured Louisa! Have you for a truth, my Lady, always observed the commandments of God?—Who now may be convicted of perjury—you or I?—Poor Melmoth!—you are to die, as you have lived, under the wrath of God—is it not so, Madam?—Sweet Louisa! how have you been reviled!’

‘Would to heaven you and Louisa were both dead at my feet this instant!—My reputation is gone!—Western!—’tis false I assure you—let me implore you not to believe it!’

Implements of writing were called for, and I made her give a solemn revocation with her own pen of all that had been spread to the dishonour of Louisa—it is sufficiently satisfactory, I think, to open Montague's eyes, and convince him of his error.

We were as glad to take leave of Lady Sommerville as she could have been to see us out of her house—Before we left it, we begged to speak with Mrs. Walker—we thanked her for her generosity to Lady Louisa, and assured her she should lose nothing by it; then, putting a trifle into her hand, entreated her to accept of it as an earnest of our acknowledgment, which we would make in a proper manner as soon as the business we were engaged in was settled, and we could find out a way of serving her to her wishes.

‘You are to blame, gentlemen,’ cried she, ‘in supposing my behaviour generous towards Lady Louisa—I have done no more than my duty; and must beg of you take back your present. On this occasion it looks like a gratification, and that I cannot think of receiving for performing only the upright, just part.’

We urged her with warmth not to refuse us; but she was resolute.

‘I am going immediately from this house,’ said she; ‘I am no longer safe in it!—If I can be of further use to you, gentlemen, I shall be found at my brother’s, who is a mercer in Bond-street—With him I shall remain, till I can get into a Lady’s service suitable to my inclinations. The steward has promised to remit me the wages due from Lady Sommerville, whom it agrees neither with my security nor desire to see again.’

She curtsied modestly, wished us all happiness, and retired. Melmoth and I got into the chaise, and went back to his house, from whence he would not let me depart till this morning.

He is, in spite of his bad health, still an entertaining companion—He avoided as much as possible to mention Lady Louisa, or Sir Charles, after our return from Sommerville-House.—The topic is unpleasing; for he yet loves her, I am sure. He told me, that his physicians recommend to him to drink the waters at Barege, and to go over as soon as possible for that purpose. ‘I was on my rout to Bigorre,’ cried he, ‘when I so luckily (I must ever think it, however painful the cause) was prevented from proceeding—
You

You see, Norton, I am already reduced to the last state—the Faculty are ignorant what further to do with me—and wish to send me from them to die in a strange country.’

‘You are despondency itself!’ replied I: ‘those waters are very famous: pursue, Melmoth, their advice without loss of time, and if it can be of comfort to you to have the society of an old friend, depend that I will be with you soon after you are fixed in Bigorre. I would accompany you thither; but you know how I am circumstanced, and with others business, and my own, it may be a month or six weeks before I can leave England—too long a delay for you to make certainly.—Yes, you shall try the waters of Barge—I will recommend you to the friendship of a very respectable family that lives near Bagniers, whom you must like extremely.—If that place answers not, let us then see what Naples can do.—Entertain no doubt of your recovery—the Almighty has thought fit to rouse your reason by shewing you, in a near light, the awful image of death—you have thrown off your bad habits—and with returning health will assume quite opposite ones—Away with fear!—think only of getting health—you and I shall yet experience a happy old age!’

‘Oh, Norton!’ cried he, clasping my hand, ‘you renovate the springs of expiring nature! And is it possible that you will come over to a poor miserable invalid!—But you always proved the only true friend I owned.—Had I been guided by you, I should now be in perfect health, and blessed, perhaps, with Louisa Sydney.—Of that no more—some good has been produced by my suffering—I have had opportunity enough to look into myself, and to mend my heart—Norton, I have softened it—I am no longer that haughty master my servants used to find me—I can bear contradiction without being ready to take the person by the throat who presumed to oppose me—Adversity is the only school on earth for your proud, turbulent dispositions!—But, dear Norton, I can scarcely think you in earnest—What, leave England, which you are but just returned to—leave your friends!’ —

‘Upon

'Upon my soul, I will go to you as soon as I have it in my power—England can have few charms for one situated as I am.'

The poor man was much pleased, and determined to set out in two days. This evening I shall begin my journey towards Wales—may I be as successful in that tour, as I have been in this! Your Lordship, I am sure, will be satisfied at my not calling on you—I should lose time by it—and when we next meet, it will afford me double pleasure to tell you that our friends are restored to felicity.

I am much indebted to Lady Julia Herbert for her benevolent permission to make the letters subservient to any purpose I please—(such were the words your Lordship used): they will tend to one essential point,—that of convincing Sir Charles he is most tenderly beloved by his fair Mistress—I will let your Lordship know as soon as possible the result of my visit to him; and am with great respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

And faithful servant,

WILLIAM NORTON,

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

(Enclosing the preceding letter.)

Windsor.

I ANTICIPATE your joy, my dearest Julia at discovering that Louisa is cleared from the abominable calumny of Lady Sommerville—that the vile creature's guilt is detected—and that she now stands with all justice in the debased light she placed your innocent friends!—But I forget whom I am writing to! 'No,' you cry; 'I cannot rejoice at the latter part of your intelligence—I am rather sorry for it.' Well, my dear, be sorry;—but allow me to be very glad—at least

least that her wickedness is exposed—Oh, that Melmoth had persisted in his enquiry after those circumstances against her that Walker and Clairon could prove!—I would shew her no mercy—Do, Julia, as you regard my happiness, question Clairon about them, and let not a syllable escape your pen when you write to me—What a fine column in the Morning-Post will they take up! Mr. B—will be made gloriously happy in such an opportunity of obliging the public—and that he may be happy in the extreme, take care to charge her in the recital to leave out no scandalous—nay, indelicate trait. Should Clairon think the account too bad for you to hear—or me to read, let her write it herself, and address it to him where his paper directs.—So that Lady Sommerville is held up to mankind in the colour she deserves, I yield the point of being made acquainted with the incidents of her shame.

My opinion is, that Louisa had best remain in her present state of ignorance till we get Mr. Norton's next letter, which shall be dispatched to you as soon as we have read it.

Surely, my dear Julia, the happy way your friend is in, of having her ill fortune reversed, must make you chearful! Let this example urge you to hope as great a change in yours—

Adieu! I write in haste, and can only say that I am

Your affectionate

CAROLINE MORTIMER.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey.

I AM indeed, my dear sister, rejoiced at the issue of Mr. Norton's friendly journey into Hampshire! May the one he is now undertaking be (as he says) attended

tended with equal success! Depend that I shall be as silent as the grave, concerning what you so kindly and expeditiously impart, till I receive your commands to speak—but I think you had best not to keep Louisa too long in the dark, lest a sudden and unexpected sight of Sir Charles should hurry her spirits more than you would like—It is not improbable but he may come to her as soon as he knows what Mr. Norton has to unfold.

Pardon me, Lady Mortimer, for refusing your request—I will put no questions to Clairon—Lady Sommerville is truly mortified—and, however culpable, it does not in my opinion, justify those in whose power she is for bearing too hard upon her—Mercy is a godly attribute—and Mr. Norton behaved with generosity—with delicacy, in seeking to know no more of her secrets than were sufficient in the meritorious cause he engaged in, of defending oppressed virtue.—Besides, may not the judicious forbearance of exalted minds, lead her to draw a comparison between them and her own?—What a contrast will she find!—Might not remorse follow—and then amendment? For pity's sake, my dear sister, let her rest—and think no more of her!

My Lord Arne has had a slight fit of the gout which detains us here; but, as he is on the recovery, we expect soon to remove to Southampton. He and his Lady have begged of me to complete a *partie quar-ree* to Bath in November, a visit to which place my Lord judges necessary for his disorder—Without consulting Lady Pemberton, I have excused myself—I will now wait the result of Mr. Norton's explanation, and when Sir Charles and Louisa are reconciled (if that ever happens) go back to Windsor.

I am surprized at the daily change that appears in her—I may safely pronounce, that, should Montague never return, her former health and cheerfulness will. She never mentions him—and endeavours by a thousand ways to dissipate her thoughts. The harpsichord is a great enemy of his—she draws me into play—and from the constant practice I have, you will find

find me improved, I fancy, when you hear me: Lord and Lady Arne are fond of music almost to a fault—it is the principal pleasure Louisa has—-I have liked it better than ever, since I discovered how great a proficient in it Lord Osinond is—since his flattering encouragement induced me to pursue that charming science—every thing then combines to make me pass most of my time at some instrument.

I wish to God, Caroline, the Duke of Westmorland had been employed as I was last night.—I spent two hours in gaining instruction from that admirable work of a writer, whose name must in all ages do honour to this country—The subject of my attention was the third volume of Johnson's Rambler: in it I met with a paper marked No. 148, which (if any thing in nature could) must have affected the tyrannical father.

Adieu, my amiable sister—I have so little to entertain you with, that to write long letters would be a sad tax on your lively genius—Commend me properly to your coterie, and think me

Your affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lord MORTIMER.

Saturday Morning.

I Got to Carnarvon, my Lord, on Sunday night, after a very long and fatiguing journey. I wrote a note to Sir Charles Montague, telling him of my arrival in this country, and that I intended myself the pleasure of waiting on him the next day; and, leaving orders with the people of the inn to send it early in the morning to Elwellyn Castle, I went to bed. When I awoke, my fellow delivered me an answer couched in the following words:

• What

‘What can have brought my dear William into Carnarvonshire? Let the motive be what it may—I rejoice at it, as it gives me an opportunity of once more seeing you! But allow me to warn you, my good friend, to say nothing to me of Lady Louisa Sydney—The papers have informed me of Sir George Sommerville’s death——I dread hearing that she is married—I have forfeited all title to her favour, and ought to be disinterested enough to wish her virtues were rewarded in the arms of some deserving man——but I have not yet sufficiently conquered this proud, aspiring heart! I will be with you in a little while—observe the caution I give, and believe me,

Your faithful

CHARLES MONTAGUE.’

I dressed in haste, went into a parlour, and was just about to breakfast, when a phaeton and four drove to my window, turned into the yard, and I heard some voices say, ‘Sir Charles Montague!’ I flew to the door, and saw the very man descending from it. I need not represent to your Lordship the joy that must attend the meeting of two very particular friends, after several months separation.

Sir Charles desired to know my business in Wales? I said, to see him—then enquired what *business* kept him remote from all his acquaintances, immured in the old castle of Elwellyn?

‘Your question hurts me, Norton!’ cried he. ‘Do you not know that I have nothing of my fortune left?’

‘What, Montague!—how can that be, and in possession of Elwellyn?—Methinks an estate of six thousand a year is not to be accounted *nothing*!’—He looked confused.

‘It is true, I have the use of the house to shelter my unhappy head from the inclemency of the weather—but the estate is mortgaged for more than its value.’

‘And

‘ And how do you contrive to live, my dear Montague?—The sight of your land, trees, and falls of water, cannot sustain nature, I presume.—Perhaps you have brought yourself to exist on the dews of the earth!—It is lucky that you are susceptible of such ailment!—but it is a monstrous change, from feasting on ortolans and quaffing claret and champaign.’

‘ Pshaw! what does it signify how I live!—You have not lost your old custom of pressing me to death with disagreeable interrogatories!—Say no more—I have saved two hundred a year out of the wreck, and let that suffice.’

‘ Oh Lord, oh Lord! what an excellent economist you must be to make so small a sum go such lengths! A new phaeton highly finished—four beautiful bays—two fellows well mounted, well apparelled, whose countenances speak opulence, content, and cheerfulness.’—

‘ You are devilishly teasing, Norton!—Come, order your servants to convey your chaise and baggage to Elwellyn—now that I have you, you shall not leave me soon!’

I got into his carriage, and he drove me to the castle.—I have been here before, and well knew what a romantic place he had made choice of to indulge his melancholy in. The habitation is built in a Gothic style, very awful, very magnificent.—There are high hills that almost kiss the clouds, which form an amphitheatre from the back view of the house.—They are covered with trees, that have been held in great veneration by Sir Charles’s ancestors; so much so, as to have thought it a kind of sacrilege to send an axe amongst them. They look to have been the haunts of Druids, and the residence of Hamadryads. A large body of water rushes from a stupendous height, which, from being frequently interrupted in its progress by a number of rocks, forms a cascade more noble than it is in the power of fancy to paint, and falls into a rapid river, that serpentine for many miles through the estate—From the front of the castle you command rich vallies, fine lakes, and distant

tant buildings. The situation of Elwellyn must be exquisite to a love-sick imagination. In this solitude Sir Charles has poured out his soft complaints, and found his passion fed by the scenes around him.

I obeyed his injunction of not mentioning Lady Louisa to him—yet I omitted no opportunity of rallying him on the motive he alleged, for retiring to the romantic mountains of Carnarvonshire—Sometimes he would look vexed—at others, he could not refrain from laughing. But though he put the best face on to me, it was perceptible enough that his mind was ill at ease. I plainly saw that he often wished I should talk of Louisa in spite of his prohibition—I was determined not to be the first to enter on the topic, to mortify him for his reserve.

After supper last Wednesday, and after taking two thirds of a bottle of Burgundy, he ventured to ask where Lady Louisa was?

‘I have not seen, nor heard from her since my arrival,’ was my answer.

‘Ah, Norton,’ cried he, ‘your evasion tells me all I am anxious to learn!—She is married!’

‘Not yet, I believe.’

‘Oh gracious Heaven!—then she is to be shortly?’

‘To say the truth, I am ignorant of it—But as you introduce the subject, I will tell you what is my views—You must know, Montague, that I have long loved Lady Louisa.—As I heard from your own lips of your attachment to her, I could not in honour reveal my passion—You soon became an accepted lover—I retired from England till I could bring myself to behold your mutual happiness without emotion—with such sentiments alone, as friendship to both of you ought to possess. I now find that you have withdrawn your addresses—honour no longer interferes—I am free, certainly, to endeavour to obtain her heart!’

Montague clasped his hands, fixed them on the table, and rested his head upon them.

VOL. II. K ‘Now,’

‘ Now,’ continued I, ‘ I should not hesitate a minute about the matter, but that I hear she is infatuated to a fellow, who, I suspect, proves himself very unworthy of her.’ He started from his position.

‘ Oh Norton—— dear Norton! that is the cause of my misery—— I fondly thought myself beloved—— she constrained her heart to pretend so—— whilst’——

‘ Did she indeed *affect* a passion for you?—— It is strange!—— She is an artless girl, and I should scarcely believe her capable of dissembling!—— However, that her heart was fixed at the very time on the worthless object I speak of, is undoubted—— Lady Julia Herbert has given me some letters from Louisa, that demonstrate very fully to what an unfortunate degree she loved him.’

‘ Have you those letters?’

‘ I brought them with me for the purpose of consulting you upon them—to ask your advice whether I had not best step between the ungrateful wretch, who little knows her value, and the misguided Louisa—— If he marries her, what an inestimable jewel shall I lose!—— Will you read the letters?’

‘ No, no—— seek not to revive the keen anguish I endure at discovering her falsehood!—— She is yet too dear to me!—— her image is ever before my eyes; it embitters my hours—— and my continual wish is, that I had never beheld her—— No, Norton, I dare not look on the proofs of so much perfidy—— to peruse her own characters, which were wont to make my heart leap with joy—— now must distract me!’

‘ Well, I will not urge you—— Then I suppose, you judge it best for me to try to efface the impression my undeserving rival has made on her?’

‘ You apply to a very improper person, on such an occasion, to direct you how to act, Mr. Norton—— I begged you not to name her to me.’

‘ Nay! recollect Montague, who began the conversation—— Candour is what I boast of—— I wished first to tell you of my intentions.’——

‘ But how can you possibly expect success? You have sufficient facts of her loving another; it is no longer a secret that Mr. Melmoth is her choice.’

‘ Aye,

'Aye, so I have heard. But that shall not prevent me from going to Lady Louisa, and learning it from herself—No other evidence ought I to credit in such a case.—Though every relation she had on earth were to sound in my ears that Melmoth—that *you* was beloved by her; nay, though I saw letters signed with her own name, which asserted it, I would doubt all, till her own voice confirmed. Relations may lie from selfish motives, and letters may be forged!'

He seemed agitated.

'Supposing you were received as a favoured lover—we will go so far as to suppose you were on the eve of marriage, and was told her inclinations were done violence to, that she hated you, and idolized another, how would you then act?'

'You suppose, that I was told so by herself?'

'No, no—that a very intimate friend, one of respectable character, wrote to you to this effect, out of friendship to each party.'

'Why then I would carry the letter to Louisa, and entreat to know, honestly, whether the contents were true?—It would be doubly incumbent on me, at such a crisis, to behave in that manner—for, was the friend a false one, such as we have many instances of—and I a credulous blockhead to take fright at what he, or she wrote, how many wretched hours might I not occasion the innocent girl, whose soul might in truth know no other felicity, than what she received from me!'

'Norton, you speak in a very harsh manner! I am not accustomed to the epithets of credulous'—

'How, my dear friend!—who thought of you? I was saying, what *I should be*, in such a case—but this topic discomposes you, I will never enter on it more—we will separate, the hour is late.'

I got up with an air of calmness, and rung the bell—he was sadly disturbed, but I knew how to manage the heart, and left him to brood over what had passed.

After I was undressed, he entered my room—I found an excuse to detain my servant, to hinder a further discussion on the head we had been upon.

‘Norton,’ cried Montague, with rather a silly countenance, ‘I come to beg a sight of the letters—I have not power to resist them!’

‘Try, my dear Montague!—consider what ill consequences they must produce—at least take a day or two to fortify your spirits: perhaps, by that time, you may be less eager to read them—and possibly may not desire it.’

‘Two days!—two centuries!—No, no, no, dear William, entrust them to my hands—I die with impatience!’

‘The effects be on your own head!—Was I to act the proper part, I do not know but that I should refuse them to you—however, if they cost you the pangs I expect they will, your feelings, your reflections will not be enviable—take them, and good night!’

He grasped the packet with trembling hands, bowed to me, and darted out of my room.

I leave your Lordship to imagine how different were the operations of those letters, from what he apprehended; and yet, I think, his mind must have endured a great deal at the retrospect of his past precipitate conduct. You will be astonished, my Lord, to hear that I have had no conversation with him upon the subject since; but I have studiously avoided it. In the first place, he deserves to be punished for the unhappiness he has given an amiable girl: in the next, I leave him time to ponder on the folly of his behaviour, to see his error in a clear light. Should he still doubt Louisa’s affection, I shall be provoked, it must be owned; but, for her sake, I will convince him of his absurdity, by producing the other papers in my possession. I will use the power while it remains with me, to make him suffer. Louisa’s readiness to pardon him on the first concession, cannot be questioned; and a temporary suspense will give a higher relish to the joy he must experience on their meeting.

I arose

I arose early on Thursday morning, and took a long ramble. I did not return till it was time to dress for dinner. I came home with a mock indisposition, which was to prevent my being good society. Luckily to help my design, I found Lord Beaumont at the castle, who had arrived an hour before me. He travelled all the way from Bagshot, to see his nephew, and to enquire into the truth of the strange rumour so industriously propagated of Sir Charles's ruin, which, however, never reached his ears till about a fortnight ago. Montague had taken no notice of his Lordship, from the time that he gave up Lady Louisa; and the poor old man, who was ignorant of his abode to the moment he was informed of it by the same tongue that announced the destruction of his fortune, came very well fraught with chidings. I dare say my Lady Mortimer will soon guess that this *intelligencer extraordinary* was no other than Jack Ainsley, the celebrated Marplot of the age; but where, or how he discovered Sir Charles's retreat, I cannot conjecture. Lord Beaumont and Montague had made up matters before I appeared, which was on a summons to dinner. Sir Charles introduced me to my Lord—he is very agreeable—his affability with young men takes off that awe which his reverend figure at first inspires; and, without losing his respect, he engages them to be unconstrained and happy in his company. He tells anecdotes of old times with such life, describes his characters and scenes in so eloquent a manner, that, far from tiring, it is the greatest amusement in nature to listen to him. One thing he strictly observes, I find, which is never to tell the same story twice. Montague treats him with more respect and attention than the prime minister of France does his Monarch. Lord Beaumont's behaviour to Sir Charles, is just what it ought to be—never too familiar—yet always friendly and easy—he seldom speaks but in a jesting way, which is full of humour, and highly entertaining.

Montague's features betrayed perplexity and uncertainty—he looked frequently at me, as if to reproach me for my deceit—for my severe sentiments of him—

and for avoiding him as I had done all the morning: however, at times he would seem enraptured—laugh from his heart at something Lord Beaumont or I might chance to say—and then his countenance would be again overspread with conflicting doubts.

Lord Beaumont is by no means an enemy to small hours: he refused to break up sooner than two o'clock. When we took leave, I failed not to complain of the indisposition I had provided for my purpose.

'Norton,' cried Montague aside, 'will it incommode you, if I pass half an hour in your apartment?'

'Yes, my good friend; I am ill disposed to enter upon business!'

He thought me unkind I am sure; but I was indifferent as to that. We separated—I ordered Gordon to be careful that I was not disturbed, and not to enter my chamber before I rung. I did not quit it till I knew that Lord Beaumont and Sir Charles were together. Montague's behaviour to me since has been very stiff—the title of *Mr.* was punctually made to precede my name when he pronounced it; but his manner caused no alteration in mine towards him. Some Gentlemen of Carnarvon came by invitation to dinner yesterday; they did not depart till late. Montague appeared to find very little satisfaction in the mirth that every one else participated of. He pressed no further to speak to me, and I affected not to see his chagrin or distance.

This morning, at breakfast, my Lord hinted an intention of spending three weeks at Elwellyn, and asked Sir Charles if he had not engaged me to make some stay with him? Montague replied, his wish was never to part with me; and rejoiced that I had so good an inducement as his Lordship's company not to abandon Carnarvonshire in a hurry—when he was gone, he hoped charity would urge me to remain with him.

'Oh,' said Lord Beaumont, 'I am determined that neither of you shall remain here without me. You must accompany me home, and I will find some sports to amuse you. I meditate inviting a select party of agreeable

agreeable young fellows to meet you : you shall be at liberty to do just what you please.'

I lamented my misfortune in being obliged to quit Elwellyn in a few days ; but assured my Lord, that I would endeavour shortly to express my acknowledgments at his own house, for the honour he did me.

' *Obliged to quit Elwellyn in a few days, Mr. Norton ?*

' I am so unlucky, Sir Charles.'

He cast his eyes on the ground, and was silent. I soon retired under the excuse of writing.

* * * * *

Saturday Night.

After dinner, when the cloth was removed, the servants withdrawn, and the bottle pushed about, Lord Beaumont desired he might be considered by Sir Charles and myself as a young companion of ours, who was in all our secrets—who would join us in the diversions of a fox-chace, a masquerade, a riot—in short, any vagary that wild, dissipated heads could think of entering into. ' You look surprized,' added he—' Well, do not be afraid, lest age should forget its consequence in me, and I bring a ridicule on it.—But view me in the light I speak of : throw aside all reserve, and let me know, Charles, what occasions this *froideur* in your manner towards Norton. I have heard you talk of him as the friend after Osmond you most loved—You are loth to tell me !—Come, Norton, though I have not as good a right to your confidence as I have to this young man's, there is an ingenuity about you that convinces me you will not let me ask you the question in vain.'

' Indeed, my Lord,' cried I, ' I know not why it should be, unless that Sir Charles regards me as a rival.'

' *A rival !* exclaimed he ; ' that is a terrific word—are you in truth one ?'

K 4

' I will

‘ I will give up my secret at once to your Lordship—I ardently love Lady Louisa Sydney; but she is attached to one totally insensible of her merit.’—

‘ Stop,’ cried Sir Charles, ‘ you go too far—infinately too far!’—I have discovered that it is not Melmoth you allude to—it is I whom you call the insensible, the unworthy, the credulous blockhead—speak, is it not?’

‘ In plain words, Sir Charles, I had you, and you alone, in my thoughts, when I used those expressions.’

‘ However grating to my ear, however repugnant to my feelings they were, I confess, from what I have seen in my Louisa’s own writing, I merited them but too well.—Ah, Norton, how cruel have you been in so long refusing to hear me make this acknowledgment!’

‘ Bravo!’ exclaimed Lord Beaumont: ‘ this is the way to do business—you will find it more eligible, I can tell you, young men, than sullen silence, or forced compliments of ceremony—and I shall be enabled to come at the origin of this intricate affair. You told me, on my arrival, Montague, that your fortune was not impaired, but that, disgusted with the world, you had abandoned it—and alleged the reason so common in every mouth, to be freed from the society of a set of people you despised, whom you conceived justly enough of to be assured, that, under the influence of poverty, they would cease to molest you. I urged to know what had disgusted you? You entreated me to excuse your speaking further on the subject. Now I will excuse you no longer. Let me be acquainted with the cause of your burying yourself in this solitary dwelling?’

Sir Charles was confused; but, after a little while, collected spirits sufficient to go through the recital that he gave Lord Osmond in the letter now in your Lordship’s possession. When he ended his narrative, ‘ I am convinced, my Lord,’ added he, ‘ that I have been much to blame in so hastily giving implicit faith to Lady Sommerville’s affirmation; but Heaven is my witness,

witness, that, to avoid troubling Louisa with the sight of a man, who I believed had occasioned her too much uneasiness, was the only motive that actuated my conduct on the occasion; and to be persuaded that I am as dear to her, as I once thought, would make me superlatively happy.'

Lord Beaumont condemned his rash behaviour—he spoke very sensibly—very keenly. Montague had but little to say in his vindication.

'Will you not call me your guardian angel,' cried I, 'if I give you incontestible proofs of her fidelity?'

'You have already done that, my dear William. I no longer doubt that she did love me, when I in so dastardly a manner gratified Lady Sommerville's malice; but that she does so still, requires authority from Heaven to make me believe it—No, Lady Louisa must despise, must execrate me!'

'I cannot think so,' returned I; 'but I am ignorant how you will bear to be informed of the dreadful circumstances that followed your abandoning her. She had not that to lament alone; but the unexpected death of Sir George Sommerville, which happened in a few days after his receiving the letter you wrote, declaring your inability to wed his niece. The poor old man, revived by the hope of seeing her yours, struggled victoriously against the grave for many months; but the prop which supported him taken away—no wonder he should fall immediately.—Yet there is something still worse—she has been vilely traduced.'

Montague was fixed torpid to his seat—several minutes elapsed before he could articulate—'I the occasion of her uncle's death!—Louisa vilely traduced!—Ah, my Lord, I never was completely wretched till this instant!—Norton, approach me not!—Good men must be seized with horror at holding any intercourse with such a villain.'

'Could you not make reparation, ample reparation for these misfortunes, my dear Montague, I would never have mentioned them to you. Be a man; be composed; possess yourself. I have declared the bad; the

good comes next to be related. Lady Sommerville is punished—Lady Louisa cleared. Let us go through the whole affair this evening;—and my worthy Lord will assist us with his counsel how to proceed next !’

Lord Beaumont was deeply affected at his nephew’s situation—I withdrew for the papers I had to shew them—On my return, I gave, from the beginning, a detail of Lady Sommerville’s whole plot; her conversations with Lady Arne and Lord Pemberton; her inhuman treatment of her niece; my consultation with your Lordship; my journey into Hampshire, and the incidents that followed,—which, I told Sir Charles, plainly demonstrated that Lady Sommerville was the sole origin of every calamity that had happened—that it was incumbent on him to set his mind at rest, and look forward to the means of rewarding Louisa for all she had endured. Sir Charles said, his blind jealousy had made him as culpable as Lady Sommerville; and that to renew his addresses was out of the question. ‘It would be presumption unparalleled, Norton!’ added he: ‘you are the person to whom she must be given; you have evinced your passion; you have cleared her injured reputation; you have suffered no artful instigator to work upon your senses; you have been an assiduous friend, an ardent lover; you alone are worthy of her—and I am lost!’

‘I swear to you, Montague,’ replied I, ‘that, was I as deserving of her as you say, and she was to consent to become mine—tenderly as I love her, I would not marry her. My notions are delicate: I would not be content with the second place in her heart; and am satisfied, gratitude only could compel her to bestow her hand on me. Think of me no more in this case: pardon my trial of your affection for her last Wednesday; pardon my keeping you in suspense—I meant to punish you—I already repent of it—And now look on me, as one who sympathizes in your distress; who will leave nothing undone to accomplish your union!’

Lord Beaumont snatched my hand, and thanked me for what he termed my generosity to his dear Charles. ‘And now, my boys,’ cried he, ‘what do you think
of

of our setting out for Lord Arne's to-morrow? We will tear up the earth with our haste, and for once in our lives spare neither drivers nor horses—You fancy me dilatory;—nay, if you will go off this minute, have with you!—I am young again, and imagine it is my own mistress that I am hurrying to, on the wings of the wind.'

I begged his Lordship to moderate his impatient extacies a little. I hinted that it might be very necessary that Lady Louisa should be first informed of the transactions which had passed at Sommerville-House, as I was convinced that she knew nothing of them yet.

'Pshaw!' exclaimed Lord Beaumont; 'the sight of Montague will afford an agreeable surprize to her—I hate your dull delays!'

Sir Charles implored his uncle to be guided by me.

'Our good Norton, my Lord, has reason for this caution, no doubt!—My eager heart with rapture anticipates our meeting; and yet I cannot suppose she desires to see me—She never will be mine!'

I proposed dispatching this letter to your Lordship by express—it was readily assented to. I am sure, Lady Mortimer will lose no time in preparing Lady Louisa to expect a return of her penitent.

We intend leaving Elwellyn Castle on Thursday morning; and so far from *tearing up the earth* which lies between this and Wallingbrook-Abbey, and *destroying drivers and horses*, we shall take the journey very leisurely, lest we should arrive pre-maturely.

I have nothing more to add, than my good wishes for your Lordship, and my best respects to Lady Mortimer, and her two amiable companions. I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most faithful,

And obliged humble servant,

W. NORTON.

To

To Lady JULIA HERBERT (*enclosing the preceding letter.*)

Windsor.

READ Mr. Norton's letter from Elwellyn, my dear girl, and then in the best manner you are able acquaint Louisa with all the mischief that was practised against her. I presume you are at Southampton; so there will not be as much danger, as Norton apprehends, of a surprize. I begin to pity Montague, and wish his sighs may be soon at a period. I have a foolish good-natured heart, that readily softens when a person acknowledges a fault. Do, dear Julia, if the marriage is speedily solemnized, press the happy pair, Lord Beaumont, your kind host and hostess, to pay us a visit at Windsor. We expect Norton here, before that event takes place;—but my Lord will write the Gentlemen—I the Ladies invitations, as soon as you inform us that you are blessedly *en train*. Lord and Lady Arne can as well go from hence to Bath.

I suppose you hear regularly from my mother and her party, and know that they have been upwards of three weeks in Kent.

The Duke of Westmorland and his *cara* are in London, busied in making up cloaths, equipages, &c. &c. &c. against the approaching *joyful* occasion.

And now bear it with patience, when I tell you that you have lost a captive—Lord Seymour was married on Monday to Miss Walpole.

Westbrook, who is with us, bids me assure you of his love, that he longs to see you. The time draws very near for his becoming a *grave, important* married man. I trust the ceremony will not have the same bad effect on his temper, that it produced on my brother's. —(Indeed his choice is a preferable one!)—However, let me tell you, some few hints I gave Pember-ton on that head, seemed to make an impression on him; though I must do him the *justice* to say, that he received them with a very ill grace. You have much
reason

reason to regard Sir James; for I believe he would go any lengths to render you happy.—Adieu, my dear Julia!

Ever yours,

CAROLINE MORTIMER.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Southampton, Monday Night.

WE came here two days ago, my dear sister, and have been already visited by the most fashionable inhabitants of this city. Amongst those who immediately paid us that compliment were Col. Worthley and his Lady. He was in the beginning of the last winter a lover of Louisa's, but, on her rejecting of him, he turned his thoughts on Miss Stephenson, who very gladly accepted the heart that Louisa refused. He is smart, dégagé; she is very pretty, and very lively.

I received your dispatches this afternoon—Louisa was in her dressing-room, employed in trimming a sacque for Lady Arne, with some of her own work. I was reading to her Ladyship in the drawing-room when your servant arrived; so that I had a lucky opportunity of disclosing to her the part Mr. Norton had performed at Sommerville-House, and at Elwellyn—and what we were to expect from it. I need not expatiate on the pleasure my tidings gave her. She went to acquaint my Lord of what she had just heard; and I repaired to Louisa's apartment.

My poor friend was deeply affected at my recital, and much shocked at Lady Sommerville's conduct; but she uttered no reproaches, and only lamented the degeneracy of her principles. She was penetrated at Mr. Norton's goodness—at my Lord Mortimer's humanity, in being chiefly instrumental to the benefit she had received. She mentioned Lady Arne's and my brother's tenderness,

tenderness, in paying no regard to the report which was made to her dishonour, with acknowledgment. She shed tears of sorrow for Mr. Melmoth's ill health, and for her having judged so rashly—so unworthily of him, as to suspect he had been the author of her misery. As to Sir Charles, she was silent. I entreated to know whether she did not compassionate him? She shook her head—

‘Read there, Louisa,’ cried I giving her Mr. Norton's last letter to my Lord: ‘decide whether your noble friend did not revenge you on him sufficiently. If the least advocate for the man you once so tenderly loved remains in your breast, stifle not its pleadings—in every wandering of the senses during this unlucky affair, how dreadfully has he suffered! For God's sake, let the examples of generosity which that paper contains, operate on you! Instead of the disdainful mistress Sir Charles expects to behold, allow him to find his gentle, forgiving Louisa!’

‘Depend upon it, Julia, that I will be as generous as I can—I determined, on the receipt of Sir Charles Montague's last, inhuman letter, never to marry—I revoke the resolution—I will marry—Mr. Norton shall be the husband of my election.’

‘That would be ridiculous indeed!—but read what you have in your hand; and learn, that, though you should be absurd enough to persevere in such an intention, Mr. Norton has too much sense, too refined a way of thinking, to receive a wife with sentiments of gratitude for him, instead of sentiments of love.’

She perused the letter with infinite composure—she folded it up deliberately, and gave it back to me with this apostrophe, ‘Excellent Norton!’

‘You are very unkind, dear Louisa,’ cried I, ‘thus to keep me in suspense by your reserve!—Do you not pardon Montague?’

‘Yes, Julia.’

‘And will you not reinstate him in your affections?’

‘I have had a very great struggle to cast him from them—I think what I have endured was a punishment I deserved

I deserved from Heaven, for permitting my soul to doat with so much fondness on any created thing—In that light I viewed my misfortune, in being deprived first of him, and then of my dear uncle—No, never—never will I again give him that place in my heart he once held. I have brought myself, I trust, to reflect on him with indifference ; I hope I should look on him without emotion. If I can prevent seeing him, I will do it ; if I cannot, the disagreeable circumstance must be submitted to with patience.'

'All this is very fine, Louisa!—But I regard matters now in a reverse way. Perhaps Heaven was offended at the height of your love for Sir Charles (which by the bye I cannot believe): it tried your fortitude in bereaving you of him for a while—you acquitted yourself under that calamity as became a christian ; and it rewards your resignation to its decrees, by giving him back to you.—Ah, my God ! consider what affliction he endures.'

'Consider what affliction I endured, when planning schemes of future happiness—when, in momentarily expectation of his coming who was the source of every blessing I fondly hoped—I received a letter—a cruel, insulting letter, to say, we should never meet again.—I was told to look into my heart for the cause—I did look into it—and found nothing there, but an ungovernable passion, that would not be instantly quelled by such an outrage from the contemptible object of it—What torments equalled mine!—A helpless, weak, wretched girl!—To give implicit credit to Lady Sommerville—to forget, the moment she spoke, all that I had done to prove my love!—Julia, he either was glad of the pretence to leave me—or is of so jealous, so suspicious a nature, as will render the woman miserable whom he marries!—Mention him no more, I conjure you, but let us avoid him—Give me a new proof of friendship, dear Julia—accompany me to Windsor—we will elude this visit !'

I observed ; and, on her again urging it, told her if she wished to *avoid him*, Windsor would not be the place, for that you and my Lord were warmly his defenders,

fenders, and that there was no doubt but he would be glad to find her sheltered there. She wept bitterly, and proposed our going into Kent to my mother. I said, if she was resolved on it, I would certainly attend her; but that it must appear very odd, and as if she was afraid to trust herself with a sight of Sir Charles. That settled the point directly: she declared, so far from it, that she would stay and convince him of her firmness.—I left Lord and Lady Arne pleading for the unhappy Montague.—In spite of what she says, I am persuaded she is as ardently attached to him as ever; and, however strange, I had a contrary opinion till this evening. Resentment appears to her imagination in the form of hatred; but it is no more than a cloud over her love, which the approach, the sorrow, the rhetorick of Sir Charles, will remove. If so totally indifferent, why care whether she sees him or not?—If she still loves, yet determined not to marry him, why care what his thoughts may be of her flight? She would let him think as he pleased, be attentive alone to her own security, and effect it by the only feasible plan left her.—Hence I conclude that she is neither *indifferent*—nor absolutely bent on being cruel.

Mr. Norton's letter was dispatched from Elwellyn yesterday week—the gentlemen were to set out last Thursday—Well, many days will not elapse before we see them, and know the result I am so anxious for.

* * * * *

Tuesday Evening.

We are to pay a visit this evening to Mrs. Worthley, and accompany her to the ball. Once more, my dear sister, much against my will do I enter into public—The last time I danced—ah, good God!—Caroline, what ideas crowd upon my brain!—Think not I will profane my hand by giving it to any other partner than the one it was yielded to on that memorable night—How insipid, how despicable now, are all diversions to me!

* *

* * * * *

Twelve o'Clock.

I am more than ever convinced, that, in defiance of all Louisa's boasted tranquillity, she adores Montague. I never saw her possess better spirits than she has done all day: her features were brightened. her complexion vivid. She danced with Colonel Worthley. Once as she passed us in a cotillon, Lord Arne whispered me,

'Her heart is not *much* oppressed—the expectation of seeing Montague has taken a prodigious weight off it, Lady Julia!—Yes, yes, the thing will do!'

'When do you suppose he will be here, my Lord?'

'I look for him momentarily. If it had not been for that tedious dog Norton, all would be over by this time—but he must wait, forsooth, till she was apprized. Cursed nonsense! I swear to you, Lady Julia; I am at a loss what to think of the young men of this age; they know not what it is to be in love; they had rather fail in visiting their mistresses, than in consulting their glasses—Was there ever any thing so insensible as Sir Charles, to aid Norton in begging his uncle to postpone their journey?—Ah! in our days, Beaumont and I were very different lovers. Had you seen with what ardour I woo'd my dame!—there she sits—I made a riot every night under her window, to let her know that I passed all my time in thinking of her—determined within myself, that she should not rest till she had made me happy—But, faith, I was obliged to drop that nocturnal recreation; for it was hinted that a cousin of mine, who hoped to get my fortune, meditated obtaining a statute of lunacy against me—Aye, aye, we were very opposite lovers indeed!

Would to God, my dear Caroline, that Louisa may not trifle away her happiness romantically, as my mother once told me on a distressing occasion! For my own sake, as well as hers, I wish her married to Sir Charles, that I may leave this place. One of my misfortunes of late is, always to think that I shall be easier in any spot than that which contains me. At Windsor I must

must in reality be so—I shall have every satisfaction in your society, and your amiable companion's. Indeed, I have nothing to quarrel with here, but the continual disturbance of a new visiter—and that, in my opinion, is enough in all conscience!

* * * * *

Wednesday Evening.

Louisa's face wears the contrary marks of uneasiness and happiness. One minute she is in tears, and hopes Sir Charles has so just an idea of her, as to be assured of her contempt, and that he will spare himself the mortification of being told that he merits nothing more from her—The next she smiles, and inadvertently rejoices that he has discovered how unworthily he treated a heart which was so wholly his.—Ah, what inconsistency!—She goes often to the window; fancies her motive for doing so, is misconstrued; that I suspect her of looking for Sir Charles—vindicates herself, though I have not opened my lips—I laugh; she blushes, and is vexed.

* * * * *

Thursday Night.

After tea Lord Arne informed me, in a low voice, that his friends from Elvellyn were arrived at the George; that he had just received a note from Mr. Norton to say, that they had been at Wallingbrook-Abbey, and, finding the family removed from thence, had followed to Southampton; that the trio only waited permission to pay their respects to him and Lady Arne. 'I am going,' said my Lord, 'to conduct them hither. Dear Lady Julia, let a kind welcome from a certain favourite of yours await the poor woe-begone baronet!' I beckoned Louisa to accompany me to Lady Arne's dressing-room (for there were strangers with us), and when we got there I told her what I had just heard. I never saw her so agitated. 'Julia,' cried she, I cannot see him—indeed I cannot! I was
courageous

courageous till now—now I am the veriest coward!

‘Why, my dear Louisa, there is no great exertion of courage requisite on this occasion. You are extremely mistaken in imagining that Sir Charles is not still dear to you. Believe me, human nature has miseries enough to encounter, without our endeavouring to find more in our own caprices—Tell him you forgive him, and are as willing as he can be to draw the veil of oblivion on past errors.’

‘Never—never, Julia!’

‘Well, Louisa, you know best; but I should do so in your case.’

‘You was not so complacent to Mr. Lenox, Julia!’

‘My God, what a comparison!—In the first place, Mr. Lenox committed an unpardonable crime in my opinion—in the next, I never loved him. And, after all, what has Montague done? He has been too diffident—been too delicate.’

‘You have not felt as poignantly my sufferings on his account, as I should have felt yours on any interesting subject; else you would think his behaviour ought not to be glossed over by such phrases.’

‘As I know your present conflicts, I can readily give no attention to this unkindness. You will judge otherwise of me when you are calm.’

She threw her arms round my neck, and wept most piteously—At the moment Mr. Norton entered—she got up, and flew towards him with precipitation—she would have fallen at his feet, had he not prevented her. He saluted her with tenderness, and, after enquiring about her health, begged to be allowed to introduce to her the most repentant—the most ardent of lovers.

‘I disown every lover,’ replied she, ‘but him who is cruel enough to reject me—he says I shall never be his wife—never will I be any others!’

Mr. Norton seemed confused.

‘My dear Louisa,’ returned he, ‘I have one very particular request to make you, which, if you deny me,

me, might make my life most wretched—say that you will not?’

‘I already, my generous friend, owe you more than life—the horrid stain you have taken off my character’——

‘No more, no more, Louisa!—you distress me—What I have to supplicate is, that, in the presence of Lady Julia, you will promise from this minute not to tempt my prudence by an offer of your hand—I doubt my strength—If have not fortitude sufficient to withstand it—I shall be miserable—even with you miserable!—Promise this; or I am gone immediately from your sight, perhaps for ever!’

She hid her face in my bosom.

‘You hear him, Julia—what inhumanity!—He has proved his affection for me in a manner that no language can express—he has attached me to him by every tie—my heart is now devoted to him alone—and in a cruel instant he blasts all my hopes by bidding me not dare to aspire to so much worth.’

Norton’s eyes sparkled—he was about to press her hand to his lips—to pour forth his transports—but suddenly checking himself—in the third part of a second, his whole form assumed another appearance. He dropped her hand: ‘Promise what I ask, Louisa—or farewell!’ He got up——

‘Stay,’ cried she: ‘since you are so barbarous as to desire it—since I am no longer dear to you—since without this promise I am never to see you more—my protector—my best friend—the beloved’——

‘Oh, Louisa, this is too much!’ exclaimed he; ‘for God’s sake spare me!—I cannot be a man and—Lady Julia, adieu!—Restore your friend to reason when I am gone—and tell her that this is nothing more than an illusion of the senses—I am not the beloved of her soul—the reflection of a cool moment will convince her that I am not.’

‘Do not go, Mr. Norton,’ cried Louisa; ‘I implore you not to leave me, and I solemnly promise to torment you no further—I have done, Sir—you shall hear nothing more of my attachment—it disgusts you—and I will comfort myself in the hope of your finding

finding with another that felicity you confess I cannot give you !'

He was much affected—I compassionated him sincerely—I knew the sacrifice he made was to honour—to delicacy—He would not interfere with Montague's happiness—he would not be satisfied with a heart, he suspected, given to him merely through punctilios of gratitude. I should have thought her in a hazardous situation with any other man—I believe there is not another who could have withstood the temptation—such an offer would have been gladly accepted by any lover of Louisa's but himself. Her imagination, confused by the impulses which actuated her, would never have been able to analyze the motive—to abstract gratitude from love—She would have married, as she supposed, the object of her affections, and in a little time have found out the mistakes of her precipitate heart. Whilst Mr. Norton was endeavouring to convince her of this, Lord Arne entered, followed by Sir Charles Montague—his person strongly testified the melancholy he was absorbed in—He approached slowly, with his hands in his bosom, and his eyes bent on the ground, the sofa we were seated on. Louisa in a minute collected all her firmness, and with a composure infinitely distressing to him, returned a ceremonious curtsy, with a very stately air, to his humble bow. He blushed, was for the first time awkward, and seemed unable to address her.

'Come, my dear Montague,' said Mr. Norton, 'take my place, and become your own advocate with this cruel girl.'

'Norton, that chilling air—my unworthiness—the keen anguish I feel—Lady Louisa, your countenance commands me from your presence—it arraigns the friends I have about me, for suffering me to taste the blessing of again beholding you—You will not deign to speak to me—At your feet, let me beseech you to say, whether there is any severe punishment that can be inflicted on the credulous,—miserable Montague, which might render him less hateful in your eyes?—

Name

Name it, Madam—and then judge of my remorse, by the avidity with which I will embrace it.’

‘Indeed, Sir, I wish to punish no one—These rhapsodies are not pleasing—I beg to be released from them.’ She attempted to retire.

‘No, by my faith!’ cried Lord Arne, you must not leave the room—you shall hear all that Sir Charles has to offer in his vindication—I interest myself too nearly in your happiness not to wish him success.—Mr. Norton, this cursed gout has prevented my being an agreeable dangler at a young Lady’s side—I know the time when I would have officiated in that department better than any spark of you all—but that’s of no consequence now! Attend Lady Julia into my wife, who desires to speak with her.—Give me your hand, Louisa—here, Montague, take it—and if you part with it till you receive a vow from her to make you another before the parson—I shall think despicably of your oratorical powers.’

‘Julia,’ exclaimed Louisa, ‘since I am condemned to listen to Sir Charles, I insist on your staying with me!’

‘Lady Arne wants me, you hear.’

‘Aye, aye, so she does!’ cried my Lord; and in hastening out with us he gave his foot some unlucky hurt which made him vociferous for two minutes, and in that space he uttered two hundred oaths.

On entering the drawing-room, we found no one in it but my Lord Beaumont and Lady Arne. The old Lord is a most facetious, engaging creature.

An hour had elapsed when Sir Charles joined us in a situation that struck me with horror.

‘Oh, great God,’ he exclaimed, ‘this is too much!—Oh, my Lord, why did I come to Southampton?—To renew all my agonies—to render myself a thousand times more wretched—to love her if possible beyond what I did before—and to hear from her own mouth that she never will be mine!—Let us leave this place—I cannot bear it!’

‘So!’ cried Lord Arne, ‘Lady Louisa is inexorable!’

Sir

Sir Charles had thrown himself into a chair, and was incapable of answering—Lord Beaumont looked perplexed and very uneasy—Lord Arne and I returned to Louisa, whom we found in a violent flood of tears.

‘In the name of heaven, my dear child,’ cried he, ‘what is all this for?—Can there be any thing so abominably ridiculous!—Tell me, in one word, are you resolved not to marry Sir Charles Montague?’

‘Yes, my Lord, I am.’

‘Very well—you will repent of it, assure yourself—he is on the verge of leaving Southampton—and when you hear of his death, you may look back with sorrow on the constraint you put upon your inclinations to make him suffer.’

She attempted to vindicate her conduct.

‘Oh,’ said my Lord, ‘give yourself no trouble!’—‘You cannot convince me that you act properly—you are satisfied that you do—it is sufficient—I will tease you no more—you will hear nothing further from Sir Charles—he is persuaded that what you and he term his offence, ought not to be pardoned—when he is in some measure recovered from the deplorable condition I left him in, Lord Beaumont and Mr. Norton will remove him from you for ever.’

She was terrified, and sunk upon my shoulder. Lord Arne went out, but in a few minutes came back: ‘Lady Louisa,’ cried he, ‘I am sent against my will to entreat that you will allow Sir Charles Montague to bid you once more farewell. I remonstrated with him—I strove to convince him that it would only add torture to what he already felt: for my dear friend,’ said I, ‘are you ignorant, that, in this age, a young Lady’s characteristic is pertinaciousness? What an impeachment of good sense would follow a relaxation of her determination!—and take my word for it, that, though she loves to distraction, yet the happiness of breaking a lover’s heart is a triumph she must give to her vanity—I will tell him to begone, shall I not?’

‘You

‘ You are very cruel, my Lord,’ replied Louisa—
 ‘ Julia, what is to be done ?’

‘ Oh, see him by all means !’ answered I ; ‘ but not to repeat what you have already said.’

‘ Then I cannot see him,’ she exclaimed.

‘ That is right, my dear girl !’ cried Lord Arne—
 ‘ don’t retract for the honour of the sex ! I will desire him not to think of it’—and away he hobbled.

‘ How provoking, Julia !’ said she—‘ he has no feeling—no refinement !—Why could not Lady Arne have brought the message ?’

‘ Do not be uneasy, Louisa—I will go out and say, that I have prevailed on you to consent to the wishes of Sir Charles.’

‘ Good heaven, his wishes !—I will not marry him—you know I resolved not.’

‘ True—but I also know that rash—imprudent resolutions are better broken than kept—However, I mean nothing of the sort—but to see him *once more*—Unhappy Montague !’

‘ Oh, Julia !’

‘ He will be gone, my dear, and you will have time enough to weep after he departs.’

Before she had opportunity to reply, Sir Charles entered with Lady Arne. He threw himself at Louisa’s feet—he clasped her hands, and bathed them with his tears.

‘ I come, Madam,’ cried he, ‘ to bid you a long farewell—to implore you to think with compassion on a man whose fault is adequately chastised by an eternal separation from you—add not your hatred to such a punishment’—

He was interrupted by the appearance of the two old Lords and Mr. Norton—Lord Beaumont dropped on his knees, and supplicated his nephew’s pardon.

‘ Louisa,’ said Mr. Norton, ‘ I demand, as an instance of your friendship, that you forgive my amiable Montague—else I shall never forgive myself for what I made him suffer at Elwellyn.’

‘ I conjure you,’ cried I, ‘ by the love which has subsisted between us, to forget from this minute the cause of your quarrel !’

‘ I beg

‘I beg you,’ said Lady Arne, ‘not to gratify Lady Sommerville so far as to crown with success her iniquitous plot. She desired to separate you.’

‘And I beseech you,’ exclaimed Lord Arne, ‘to persevere in your *heroics*!—*for the honour of the sex, do not retract!*’

We looked with amazement at him.

‘Come,’ said he, ‘a second time give me your hand:’ he put it into Montague’s—‘Now I command you, with the authority of a parent, to accept of Sir Charles for your husband—there take her, and heaven make you happy! We have witnesses enough to swear, that Lady Louisa Sydney would never have married Montague, would never have yielded a point of *female perverseness*, but for the tyrannic compulsion of that old fool, who calls himself her father. This matter will be canvassed by a council of Ladies—you will be acquitted with honour. You are more indebted than you are apprized of, to my arbitrary method of settling the affair!’

‘Ah, my Lord!—Louisa—my Louisa must not be constrained—she assents not!’

‘I do, Sir Charles, assent—not from the motive Lord Arne supposes—but because I find it impossible to refuse such powerful intercessors.’

‘And to their influence alone do I owe such a blessing?’

‘Not entirely!’ replied she with a smile—‘I perceive I cannot so easily part with you as I supposed.’

‘Oh that Lady Sommerville could at this instant look in upon us!’ cried Lord Arne.

You will best judge of the immediate change which appeared in every countenance excepting Mr. Norton’s, who, though he had been so active in facilitating this reconciliation, was not a whit less sensible of the prize he gave up to Montague.

‘Another thing I have determined on,’ cried Lord Arne, ‘is this—not to have any more delays!—Sir Charles, I will have my Louisa married directly—what say you, shall it be to-morrow-night?’

Sir Charles with transport returned an affirmative. Lord Beaumont rubbed his hands, and paid his brother peer many compliments for the proposal. Louisa protested against it. Lady Arne said she ought to be allowed a few days, at least, to look about her.

‘There’s for you now!’ exclaimed her Lord. ‘My Lady, did I ask you to say a word about the matter? Had I suffered you to have been the bearer just now as you desired, of Montague’s message; he would have been half way to Elwellyn by this time!—Well, since you—and your young Lady there—have such objections—the ceremony shall be deferred till Tuesday night; but I swear to you, Louisa, no longer time shall be allowed you to play off your despotic airs. To-morrow we will go back to Wallingbrook-Abbey, where my friend Mr. Bensley shall on the day appointed fasten the *Gordian knot*.

Louisa declared she was unwilling to convince Sir Charles, by so much haste to confirm him hers, that she was afraid to trust him further. He pressed her in the tenderest manner not to delay his happiness, ‘Every thing is prepared for our nuptials, my Louisa: the writings are ready for signing; they will arrive from London before Tuesday. What can excuse a procrastination?’

‘Louisa,’ cried Mr. Norton, ‘consent with a good grace at once. I am obliged to be at Windsor by dinner-time to-morrow, and should be sorry to depart without hearing a short day fixed for your marriage. Let it be Tuesday.’

Lord Beaumont strenuously besought her to comply.

‘Come, my Lady,’ cried Lord Arne, taking her affectionately by the hand, ‘what do you say? Do you think well of Tuesday?’

‘Oh, I am obliged to you truly,’ replied Lady Arne, with affected displeasure, for allowing me to say a word about the matter! Great condescension in you really! However, *I think very well of it*.

I was silent; for though I wished the nuptials soon to take place, yet I thought they precipitated her too much: but they carried the point, and next Tuesday will see her Montague’s.

I shall

I shall use the opportunity of Mr. Norton's going to Windsor to send this. He is to take an early breakfast with us. There needs no great study to discover what hurries him away—he cannot stay and behold the preparations for Louisa's marriage. I should have told you that Sir Charles was very warm in his acknowledgments to this excellent friend, for the generous services he rendered him. He dwelt so feelingly on the subject, as to distress him, and affect us. Once when Mr. Norton's back was turned, Lord Beaumont said he could not have conceived it possible, on so short an acquaintance, for him to have respected—to have esteemed any man to the degree he does Mr. Norton.

I have spent two hours at my pen, and am unable to answer some passages in your last letter at present. Farewel, my dear Caroline. May every blessing attend you and my good Lord! Tell Sir James, I hope to see him soon—that pleasure will be heightened in finding him the husband of my amiable Emily. Fail not to embrace her—and to present to Lady Caroline Denley the affectionate respects of

Your sincerely attached

JULIA HERBERT.

I return you Sir Charles's packet, as my Lord may now chuse to send it to the Marquis; and give him at once to know the late distress of his friend, and the occurrences of the past night.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey, Thursday Evening.

LOUISA no more owns the name of Sydney, but boasts that of Montague. Last Tuesday night she was married to a man, who I believe will leave no art untried to make her happy. She must think it an

obligation due to his merit—incumbent on her affection, to render him equally so. Lord Arne rejoices mightily at their union. He proposes twenty times a day to pay a visit to Lady Sommerville. No entreaties we could make hindered him from writing her a letter last night, *to demand her congratulations on an event that he well knew she has long earnestly wished should happen.*

This day after dinner, he declared Sir Charles should not make so ill a return for the blessing he had conferred on him, as to deprive his Lady and himself of the sweetest companion they ever had. Lord Beaumont did not seem well pleased, as he expected Sir Charles and his fair bride would go with him for a little while to Bagshot. He told Lord Arne so, and begged he would not disappoint him of the pleasure he had hoped for, but to accompany them. ‘Lady Arne,’ added he, ‘and my charming Julia, I am sure, will gratify me in honouring my house with their abode!’

‘Free enough,’ you will say, ‘this stranger is become with you.’ I like it of all things—he has so friendly a method of using those appellations, there is something so noble in his manner at the time, and withal his respectable form inspires me with so much veneration for him, that I am delighted to imagine he thinks me worthy of his notice.

‘I am sorry, my Lord,’ cried I, ‘that I am obliged to quit this agreeable party; but I am expected by my sister in a few days: nay more, I must presume to interfere with your Lordship’s scheme. Lady Mortimer has commissioned me to entreat the favour of every individual in this room to accompany me to Windsor. As soon as they know that Sir Charles and Lady Louisa are united, you will receive invitations from herself and my Lord Mortimer.’

‘I’ll tell your Lordship how we had best settle the matter,’ said Lord Arne. ‘This plaguy gout forces me to Bath in a few weeks—we will have the honour of attending Lady Mortimer’s invitation,—spend three weeks at Windsor, from whence we will proceed to Bath for a couple of months—attend this joyous pair

to

to London—see them presented—I hate London, therefore cannot stay long in it—Old Darby and Joan will come to Southampton for the remainder of the cold season, and meet Sir Charles, his wife, and Lady Julia, at your Lordship's favourite seat, early in the summer.'

'Excellent' cried Lord Beaumont. Lady Arne, Louisa, and Sir Charles, declared their approbation of the proposal—I thanked them in my brother's name and yours for the honour they intended you. 'But our dear Julia, my Lord,' cried Lady Arne, 'will totally spoil our project—for she persists in her resolution of not going to Bath with us.'

'Indeed, my Lady, but she shall break it though,' replied Lord Arne: 'I have no idea of young girls being positive—I laid my commands upon one daughter to marry the man of—her choice; and I will see if my other daughter is less dutiful, when I command her not to rob me of her society!'

'Would to heaven,' exclaimed Lord Beaumont, 'that I was a young handsome fellow!—I would petition hard for a repeal of that determination, Lady Julia—but as I am, what can I do more than deplore the harsh decree!'

'Oh faith, I give a tolerable guess,' said Lord Arne, 'all is not right within that lily bosom!—Where is the happy youth, Lady Julia? I sincerely wish he was present at this moment—nay, do not turn so pale!'

I was silly enough to be discomposed. Sir Charles immediately asked Lord Arne a question that quite turned the topic; and I recovered from my embarrassment.—Is it possible, dear Caroline, that my attachment should not be well known to Lord Arne? Has it not been the subject of the very papers? On the night that I saw Lord Osmond for the last time, what confusion reigned throughout the house! How many eyes were extended on me! how many ears devoured the tale as it was buzzed amidst the crowd!—The duel—that shocking duel was made as public as the sun!—Every one must have been solicitous to learn

the cause—every one must have heard that the Duke was jealous of my Osmond.—Ah, Lady Mortimer, how many people enjoyed the recital!—How was their curiosity gratified!—Perhaps they laughed at it—whilst the miserable parties themselves were absorbed in wretchedness unutterable! I am sure Lord Arne must be either ignorant of the affair, or have forgotten it; for though he has not those nice notions of sensibility which polish the soul, yet he would not, I am convinced, be indelicate. Lord Beaumont was silent; he looked at me with compassion. I caught his eyes; he instantly turned them from from me, and said something to Lady Arne.

After tea, Sir Charles begged I would allow him occasionally to speak to me of his admirable friend without constraint. I assured him, that his doing so would give me infinite pleasure.

‘I know,’ cried he, ‘I shall incur your censure, by confessing that he has not received a line from me since he left Windsor. You will think me unkind; but the only subject I could write on, was my unhappy situation. I was ignorant what to say about you; therefore, for his sake, thought I had best restrain my pen, confident at the time that Mortimer would not neglect him. He has written to you lately, Lady Julia?’

‘Two months ago, Sir Charles, a letter was sent to me from Lord Osmond, which I was bound in honour not to read. I returned it to my sister. Since that time, I have not heard of him.’

Montague expressed amazement at my not perusing it. I told him how I was circumstanced—he lamented my fate, and Lord Osmond’s still more. He enquired where he was? I said, in Switzerland, but was ignorant which of the Cantons he had made choice of. ‘Mortimer certainly knows, Lady Julia!’ ‘I suppose so, Sir!’ He declared he would write immediately to the Marquis, and get it forwarded from Windsor. He entreated me to make Osmond so happy, as to add a postscript to his letter; and used many arguments to convince me that I might do it without the least

least breach of my word ; but none of them were forcible enough to sway me over to his mode of thinking. I assured Sir Charles I durst not ; but begged he would persuade Lord Osmond to believe me not less attached to him than I was when we parted, and that I must cease to live ere my affection could abate.

Ah, Lady Mortimer, how little effect can all this have when delivered by any pen but my own ! My mother knows not the misery she inflicts on her child—my brother is too proud, too unforgiving !—But I will spare myself from the after-reproaches of my own heart, by sparing him.

I wish, my dear sister, you could tell me of my losing another *captive*, and that the Duke of Suffolk was the one ! My ardent prayer is, that he might forget me, and elect another in my stead.

My dear sister, what do I not feel in the reflection, that it is on my account alone the Duke of Westmorland casts his son from the inheritance nature intended him ! Could I find any method of preventing it, how gladly would I do it !—Perhaps, was I to write the Duke a promise never to become Lord Osmond's, it might answer ;—a dreadful condition !—yet I am not worth purchasing at so dear a rate, as by the loss of such a fortune as he forfeits for my sake. If my mother does not relent, if my brother does not become more placable, I never shall be his ; and to give up his expectations from the Duke, without attaining the purpose for which he makes the sacrifice, must render me, if possible, more wretched.—After all, my dear Caroline, it is folly to entertain an idea of their sentiments ever changing !—They may regret their cruelty when it is too late—when this anxious heart has ceased to beat, and this flattered form is mouldering in the grave !—Consider what I have proposed to you, and we will consult on the measures best to be adopted when I have the pleasure of seeing you.

Farewel, my dearest sister.

Ever yours,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady MORTIMER.

Wallingbrook-Abbey.

LADY Arne and Louisa are writing to you—the Gentlemen to my Lord, to say how gladly they accept your invitation. We shall leave this place on Tuesday. With what pleasure, my dearest sister, shall I embrace you, and my no less dear brother! The few months we have been separated, appear to me a great while—But I fear I shall not be suffered to remain as long at Windsor as you do. In a letter I received yesterday from my mother, she expresses an impatience to have me with her. I am apprehensive that she thinks me wanting in affection; for she supposes me much happier (she says) with my present party, than I should be with my family at Nevill. It is unkind to fancy so! Lady Pemberton judges erroneously of my heart in imagining that I can be happy any where. I have a notion that Suffolk is with them. If so, I certainly shall confess to her, that I am very unwilling to join *her party*.

To-morrow, you tell me, will be Emily's bridal day—Heaven shower blessings on her and the amiable partner she has chosen! I will make my own congratulations when we meet.

Adieu, my dear Caroline! I am always

Your affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Berne.

IT would be absurd, my dear Montague, to attempt describing the satisfaction I have in knowing that you are happy. May you continue blessed with Louisa as long

long as it is given the race of mortals to tread this globe with conveniency; and may you both, in a comfortable old-age, drop together into a peaceful grave!—I am sure that last wish merits your mutual thanks; for, putting aside infidelity and ingratitude, every misery falls beneath that of surviving a beloved object.

I will not hurt you by expatiating on the subject of your letter that delineates much anguish *: I am very glad it never reached me, but in company of another, that brought me so much happier tidings. You were lucky in obtaining Lady Louisa's pardon—had it been otherwise, I should have sympathized in your sorrow, but could not have blamed her—and now an end of the topic. But, what passed between you and my father was just in character. You acted a warm, a zealous part for your friend: he acted that of an unfeeling parent, who never was governed by a single tie of nature. I sincerely forgive him; and hope his heart may make him no reproaches in his last hours—or his torture must be insupportable.

Yes, Montague, it is but too true!—Lady Julia will not read my letters; much less can I expect even a postscript from her. However, Mortimer, the generous Mortimer! has in a great measure obviated the despair I should be overwhelmed in on the occasion, by sending me a letter of hers to his wife, in which mine that Westbrook carried to England was returned. It convinces me that I am better loved by her than any man—Yet I am not contented—Did she love me as I wish, nothing should restrict her from making me those assurances with her own pen—nothing would prevent her from becoming mine.—But I am exorbitant in my desires. To you her conduct is right—so it would appear to me, did I not idolize her with an enthusiasm that puts prudence—reason—every thing to flight wherever she is concerned.

* Sir Charles's letter, p. 52, of this vol. His letters to Lord Mortimer concerning his meetings with the Duke, p. 100, and 112, were sent by my Lord to the Marquis, in the same cover in which he enclosed Sir Charles's letter to him from Wallingbrook-Abbey.

* * * * *

Mortimer, Westbrook, Frederick Montague, combine, and detain me here in spite of my inclination.— So far from Julia—no fixed time for my return—how can I bear it!—No, Charles, it is impossible to be longer absent—Suffolk may do much mischief—I will be near at least to avenge my wrongs—I scarcely know what I write—I am infinitely disturbed at a letter I have this instant received from Mortimer—What do you think, Montague? He says Lady Julia proposes making my father a solemn promise never to give me her hand on condition he revokes his purpose of disinheriting me—Very disinterested of her! as she no doubt supposes—But it wears a different aspect in my eyes—it is confirmation strong, that her passion is much on the wane, and that another month will erase me totally from her remembrance. After this *noble proof of her exalted way of thinking*, intended for *my benefit*, I can have no further right to claim the preference in her heart she with such apparent sincerity, such syren sweetness, vowed I should ever maintain—No; *she acted for my advantage*—and, sheltered under that idea, will go without remorse to the altar, and there swear eternal love and constancy to my damn'd rival—Suffolk at length shall conquer—Why were women made, good Heaven, so light, so yielding to every man of fortune! And why, dear Montague, should my happiness be so entirely dependent on a female!—I am almost forgotten by her; yet have not the power to think of her with more indifference than I felt, when her brother bore her in his arms from my eager sight—curled, curled Pember-ton!—

I beg of you to observe Lady Julia narrowly. If you suspect her of the alteration I do, acquaint me with it directly. Flatter me not; but declare the truth, however horrible its shape. Fifty times in an hour I resolve to go to England with Frederick Montague, who is suddenly called thither. What should I
do

do here?—And yet to return—to be denied the sight of Lady Julia—perhaps spurned at by her—I cannot bear the thought?

You will accuse me of injustice: you will tell me that these suspicions are insulting to Lady Julia——Where is the man who loves to the degree that I do——whom such a space divides—who knows that his letters will not be received—who knows what a powerful rival he has to dread, and what a promise his mistress proposes making to an inhuman father?—Where is the man that can, thus situated, discard doubts and rest secure?—Montague, it is impossible that such a one can be found throughout the universe!—The feelings that at present occupy my breast, may be declaimed against by phlegmatic souls incapable of loving with ardour, and such I despise; but men, not destitute of tenderness, would be sensible of the anxiety I endure—with me affirm, that fear, diffidence, and sollicitude, can never be abstracted from a fervent passion.

Be as expeditious as you can (consistently with the charge I have given you) in your answer.

If you think Lady Julia's heart is as much mine as my friends say, tell her I conjure her, by those vows she uttered at Windsor, to abandon her project—to hold no communication with my father.—If she proceeds in her intention, never shall she, or you, again behold

The miserable

OSMOND.

To Lord OSMOND.

Bath.

FREDERICK came immediately to Windsor on his arrival in England, my dear Osmond, with your letter—I knew how unnecessary your fears of Lady Julia were; however, obeyed your command, and watched each turn of her soul.—I swear to you, by every thing sacred,

sacred, I believe her heart is wholly yours. In all her conversations with me, she professed the warmest attachment. Her eyes acknowledged satisfaction when you were our subject; and frequently have I seen them deluged in tears at a retrospect of what you endured on her account. I told her of your impatience under so long an absence. I urged her to allow me to recall you; and added, if she would accompany us to this city, it would be very easy for you to meet often, without the knowledge of any but a few friends, devoted to her and your interest, and your return might be kept secret. She started at the mention; and said, she apprehended she must be sunk considerably in my opinion, else I would not name to her a proposal so highly derogatory to honour and to duty. I durst not press it further; and let me assure you, this first of women proves herself more deserving of you by an adherence to such strict principles, than you do of her by condemning her prudence, and arraigning her love.

Mortimer (whom I thought it necessary to consult, though in the height of your phrenzy you forgot that *etiquette*) was unwilling that Lady Julia should know of his having informed you of her intention of writing to your father. He told me, that Lady Mortimer and himself had almost dissuaded her from it: I therefore suppressed your message to her, and beg of you to consider, were she to address him in the style you dread, how little effect it would produce—nothing can alter his purpose. Rest satisfied then, dear Osmond; and let your sweet innocent mistress act as she thinks proper.

If you wish for a testimony of her affection, I will give you a painful one—Her health is impaired from the continual anxiety of her mind—the roses are fading on her cheeks—she grows thin—but never, never did I see so divine an invalid! There is something inexpressibly touching in her appearance, that, added to her native beauty, which it is beyond the power of sickness to destroy, renders it almost impossible to gaze on her, without fancying her an inhabitant of a
higher

higher world, who has condescended to pass a little while on this gross earth.

I really cannot perceive the objection to your coming over, or why you should be confined to pass your time so tediously in Switzerland. For many reasons I would have you return; but let it be *incog*. I will still meet you at whatever sea-port in this kingdom you chuse to land. Our stay in this place shall depend on you. If you dislike Bath, Louisa, your old friend Lord Beaumont, and I, will accompany you to Bagshot, where I believe you may remain private as long as you please.—I know you will prefer being in London; but there, your arrival cannot, I am afraid, be kept secret—you will not step out of the door without beholding some acquaintance; and, should the Pemberton's learn it, they would be doubly solicitous with Lady Julia to become Suffolk's bride.

Lady Pemberton goes up to town, I hear, in a fortnight, for the winter; the Mortimer's will shortly follow with your Julia.—The hour is nigh for the amiable Caroline's commencing a mother. Heaven spare her to her worthy husband! who seems more apprehensive on the occasion than she does.

Lady Julia will, on her arrival, be taken home to Portman-Square; so that you must not flatter yourself with an idea of seeing her, at least for some time.

We left Windsor a few days ago, after spending a month there, in the pleasantest way imaginable. Westbrook informed you of his happiness the very morning on which he was united to Emily. I think he told me so.—He is a generous youth, and she is thoroughly amiable. They are well matched, and, I am satisfied, will do honour to the nuptial state.

You have already heard, my dear Osmond, that the Duke of Westmorland means once more to assume conjugal fetters. His impatience for the ceremony to be over shews much gallantry on his side: however, Henrietta, with *soft pleading* tenderness, prevailed on Lord Davenport to postpone the marriage for two months, promising by the expiration of that time to conquer
her

her aversion to so unequal an alliance.—May they be mutual plagues to each other! and may the mighty powers of Doctors Commons shortly put afunder the ridiculous pair, that the Parson will yoke together!

Lose no time in saying whether you will come over, and where I shall meet you?

I am, my dearest Osmond,

Your most faithful

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

To Lady LOUISA MONTAGUE

Windſor.

A Letter I received yesterday from Almeria informs me of a circumstance which will surprize you.

She consented about ten days ago to take an airing with Lady Percival in her phaeton. They chose to visit Dover, and on entering the town something frightened the horses. Lady Percival had not power over them—they set off in a full gallop through the narrow abominable streets of that place, and would certainly, at the next turning, have overſet the vehicle, and deprived them of life, had not Providence intervened.

A Gentleman from the window of an inn ſaw the ſituation they were in. He flew after the carriage, attended by a ſervant. They both ſeemed regardless of their ſafety; and, inſtead of ſuffering the apprehenſion of being trodden to pieces by the horſes, to operate on them, as it had done on many in the ſtreets, who were terrified only at their own danger, and flying they ſcarcely knew whither to avoid it, ruſhed forwards on each ſide, ſeized the reins, and obliged the animals to ſlacken their ſpeed, till others, finding they ran little or no riſk, ventured to approach, and

entirely

entirely stopped them. Almeria fainted, and Lady Percival was almost wild with horror. He lifted my sister out of the phaeton, whilst his servant did the same with Lady Percival. By that time their attendants came up, and helped to convey them to the inn the humane stranger had just quitted. When they recovered, they begged to know to whom they were so much obliged? Guess their astonishment at hearing this answer:

‘I am called Clermont——It is not an hour since I set my foot on British ground. I shall esteem the moment of my arrival the luckiest of my life, as it brought me time enough to assist two such Ladies. I am going immediately to London, where, if I can do you any service, I shall be extremely happy in the execution of it.’

They feared that his business might be destructive to their joint wish of introducing him at Nevill, to a number of friends, who would be anxious to make him their acknowledgments for the obligation he had laid them under; but entreated, if he could spare them a little of his time, that he would favour them with his company to the Duke of Northington’s. At the mention of his title he looked surprized, and said, he presumed he had the honour of speaking to part of Lord Pemberton’s family. Lady Percival and my sister directly made themselves known, and repeated their request, to which he politely assented. A chaise was ordered for the Ladies, and Lord Clermont, in spite of their remonstrances to the contrary, ascended the phaeton, and escorted them back to Nevill, where he staid as long as my mother and her family did, and then made one in the party up to town. They arrived there two days ago, I rejoice with you, my dear Louisa, [on Lord Clermont’s return; a circumstance you have a great while been impatient for, and which, I am sure, will make you very happy.—Almeria describes him to be very lively. She says he resembles you strongly. You will soon see him at Bath.

Another

Another piece of news my sister's letter contains, that makes me not a little glad. Mr. Lenox is married—An Italian Lady was captivated with him, and contrived to make him sensible of it. He discovered that she was of some family, very rich, and well accomplished. She had been married young, from mercenary views, to a man she disliked. At the end of four years he died, and she found herself at liberty to chuse an object more agreeable to her inclination than the one she had been compelled to give her hand to. Mr. Lenox, she thought, calculated to make her happy, and him she elected. Lord Clermont spent an evening with them just before he left Rome, and says they seemed very well pleased with each other. She is desirous of visiting England, and they are to come over next Spring.

My Lord Mortimer heard last week from Mr. Norton. He was on his way to Barege—May Heaven reward his benevolent heart by granting all its wishes! I am convinced it cannot form any, but such as do honour to human nature.

To-morrow, my excellent friend, I leave Windsor—perhaps for ever! Should any accident happen to my dearest sister, which of her family will bear to look at this sweet place! I am sure I shall not ——— But the the subject affects me too nearly!

My brother and Sophia are fixed in Grafton-street. Sir James Westbrook has taken a house in St. James's Place. When may we expect to see you in Cumberland-street? I have been so accustomed of late to your society, that I bear the loss of it worse than ever I did. We are all to dine in Portman-square to-morrow, and at night I shall take leave of my present amiable companions, with no small share of regret.

Dear Louisa, with what disagreeable reflections do I look forward to the manner in which the ensuing five or six months will be spent!—Now begins the hurry and bustle of modern high life—Last winter—ah, my Lord Osmond!———But how unavailing are regrets!———Every one will be as happy this season as they were the last, excepting your Julia!

Omit

WHAT YOU WILL.

233

Omit not, dear Louisa, my grateful remembrances to Lord and Lady Arne. Tell them I should be a most unworthy creature, did I not love them tenderly. Present my respects to Lord Beaumont; and assure Sir Charles, that he possesses, in a high degree, the friendship of

Your

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Berne.

YES, I will go over—What daggers have you planted in my heart!—My Julia's health declining, and I not near her!—Oh, Montague, should I lose her—should death, the meagre fiend, rob me of all I hold dear on earth—what—great heaven! what could equal such a moment as that would be to me!

I insist on your not leaving Lady Louisa—I will go to Bath for a few days—you know I can depend on Souville and Charles—I will be more wary of discovery than if I had committed treason—murder or sacrilege—More than my life—the life of my soul is at stake!—Fear not, then, that my imprudence may be accessary to Suffolk's happiness—But to reside out of London I cannot brook—I will find some place to be concealed in, yet not debar myself from hearing of—and perhaps some times beholding my Julia.

I care not whether or whom my father marries—all other considerations give way to the important one of my beloved's illness.

I shall soon follow this.—Farewel, and think me always

Your sincere friend,

OSMOND.

To

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Bath.

MANY thanks for your welcome tidings of my brother's arrival! He certainly means to surprize me, or is most intolerably lazy; for I have neither heard from, nor seen him. It adds to the joy his return gives me, that he was so lucky as to be serviceable to Almeria and Lady Percival.

Julia, I well knew, that, if Lenox did not marry you, he would unite himself only to one with a great fortune. Thank heaven you escaped him!

A gentleman came to Bath last night whom Sir Charles has been some time acquainted with. His name is Sedley. He saw Lord Osmond at Berne, and was commissioned by him to charge Sir Charles to plead with you to allow him to return. The only motive he has for desiring it, is to see you—if that point cannot be obtained, he may as well remain in Switzerland. He is so completely wretched at the painful separation he endures, that it is impossible he can support it long; and nothing but the fear of incurring your displeasure, hinders his immediate appearance in England, to supplicate your compassion for what he suffers from the cruel inflexibility of your relations, and to persuade you to become his.—Do, dear Julia, relax a little of your severity; recal the unhappy exile, and consent to see him. I wait your speedy answer; for Mr. Sedley is all eagerness to transmit the extatic news of your granting this request to his friend.—Can Sedley be more anxious for Osmond's felicity than Julia? Put the question to your heart, and by your reply I shall judge of its situation.

You must permit me to mention the disagreeable name of Charlotte Pelham, whom I found with her mother at this place when I came down. You will shudder at my telling you that she has rendered herself an object of contempt by her familiarity with a married man. His wife is much pitied: she is reckoned
amiable

amiable and handsome; and they were remarkably happy, till this ill-fated girl came across them. She was taken with Mr. Belmont's figure and address, which are elegant enough. She soon forgot how far superior were those charms in Lord Osmond; and, by a thousand wiles, known only to the unprincipled of our sex, engaged his attention, and robbed poor Mrs. Belmont of a heart that had been hers for many years. They are now separated. He has taken Charlotte home to his house, and, bidding defiance to all shame, goes into public with her hanging on his arm—whilst she demonstrates more tenderness in her carriage towards him, than would be warrantable before spectators, were she actually connected to him in an honourable way. Mrs. Belmont is gone to her mother, who resides in Devonshire. Mrs. Pelham has left Bath. Happily for her, she has very little feeling, else such a stroke would for ever ruin her peace. If any thing can awaken Mr. Belmont from the shocking error he is in, I should think the public scorn he meets, must do it. No one acknowledges his acquaintance: even men, whose morals may, in fact, be on the same foot with his, by the example set them in others, are deterred from admitting of his society. This would be well, my dear Julia, were it to continue; but a very few months will cast the shade of night over Mr. Belmont's crime—people will be tired of the distance they now preserve—his company will be less avoided—and by degrees once more be sought after.

I am sorry to find, by a letter from Lady Westbrook, that she and Sir James mean, in a few weeks, to go into Kent, with Lady Caroline Denley, for a couple of months. Pray tell them it is very strange they should think of quitting London, when every creature else is flocking to it. We shall go up in a fortnight.

Adieu, my dearest Julia! Lord and Lady Arne assure you they regard you more than you can do them. Lord Beaumont professes himself your warm admirer; and Sir Charles embraces you with the cordiality of a sincere friend. I am,

Much yours,

LOUISA MONTAGUE.

*To Lady LOUISA MONTAGUE.**Portman-Square.*

MR. Sedley must be a very particular friend indeed of Lord Osmond and Sir Charles, my dear Louisa, if the former could entrust him with a message of such importance to the latter.—I cannot be offended at Lord Osmond's return; perhaps I wish for it as ardently as he does: but, if he only comes with an intention to see me, alas, it will be to no effect! I am resolved, in opposition to inclination—to the pleadings of love, not to consent to it, without Lady Pemberton's leave. I am ignorant how you will determine, after this avowal, on the situation of my heart. If you think meanly of my attachment to Lord Osmond, you err extremely; and I trust he will be more generous than to impute the strictness of my conduct, to a cause I hold injurious to his merit, and my nature. But, dear Louisa, let not Sir Charles's zeal in his friend's gratification, blind your reason. Be on your guard; and in such a case retain an opinion of your own. Allow me to ask, were you still Louisa Sydney, would you incite me to see clandestinely an object I have vowed never to behold without a parent's sanction? I am sure you would not. I will persevere in my resolution;—and, in spite of what this wretched heart endures, commission you in turn to tell Mr. Sedley, that, though Lord Osmond's felicity is estimated by me far more than it can be by him, I dare not give life to it at the expense of duty and of honour. Tell him, also, that, by my steady adherence to the promise I have made a mother, he will judge how inviolate I keep the one I made to his friend.

You must perceive what little room I have to hope that Lady Pemberton would grant me permission to see Lord Osmond, was I to ask it, when I inform you, that she has gone so far, as to command me to give up all thoughts of him on pain of her displeasure—There is no obeying impossibilities. Give up all thoughts

thoughts of marrying him I do ; but to avoid reflecting on his virtues—on his amiable manners—on the tenderness he feels for your unhappy Julia, is not in my power. No, my dear Louisa, nothing can erase his image from my heart—nothing can ever make me love him less. Is it not wonderful, that my mother, so kind in every other instance, should be so cruel in this most essential one ? On my arrival in town, she started at the alteration in my look—she was sensibly afflicted at it, and the next day a train of medical professors attended in Portman-Square, pursuant to her desire. They felt my pulse—examined my countenance—a side of paper was scratched over—they promised to restore me shortly to health—received their fees, and departed. A basketful of nauseous medicines were arranged in my apartment ; I swallowed them. One of the faculty, Doctor F—, went thro' the same ceremony every succeeding day ; and the like number of bitter potions have passed my lips—yet I find myself as far from being recovered, as when the physicians first settled me on their lists of patients. They recommend dissipation—*Dissipation!*—Can my thoughts be dissipated from my Osmond ! I should despise myself, if they could—but it would be as easy to divert the needle from its faithful direction, as to withdraw his loved form from my idea.

I had not been two days in town, before the Duke of Suffolk was ushered into the room where I sat at work with my mother, Sophia, and Almeria. My dear Louisa, how was I shocked at his appearance ! I hastily arose, and retired to my dressing-room. My mother followed me soon after, and chid me for doing so. She questioned me about the tears she saw I had been shedding. I said, I thought I was unkindly treated, in being obliged to see a man so hateful to my imagination. Lady Pemberton replied, that it would be hard indeed, my family should be under a necessity of giving up a friend, because it pleased my capricious fancy to take a dislike to him. I was silent, well knowing that what I should say, would make my mother still more angry. She left me, and I composed my spirits in the best manner I was able.

About

About a week ago we were one evening at my brother's. Several persons were present. The Duke of Suffolk came in—I could not avoid him. He addressed me with as much ease, as if he had never given me reason for the least disturbance. I curtsied to him, but paid little attention to the compliments he uttered. He drew a chair near mine, and was preparing, I believe, to reproach me for flying him as I had done, when Sir James Westbrook, who was at cards, exclaimed, ‘Lady Julia, you promised to hold my cards; will you take them now?’ I readily assented, as I knew Westbrook’s good-natured motive. He leaned over my chair all the time I played, and, though Suffolk was at my side, did not afford him a moment to speak to me. My brother could scarcely refrain from passion. He took Sir James up very shortly once or twice; but my confederate friend bestowed no attention to what he said.

The next day the Duke dined with us. I was as reserved as possible towards him, and, after the cloth was removed, rose from table, ordered my chair, and went to Lady Mortimer, with whom I sat till eleven o’clock. On my return home, I saw that my mother was much displeased with me.

Three nights since we were at Lady Percival’s assembly. The rooms were full. As I passed a sofa, on which two or three were seated, some one seized my hand, and kissed it. I hastily withdrew it; and, casting my eyes on the object who had been thus presuming, discovered it to be no other than Suffolk. In a few minutes after, he followed me to another apartment. He seemed eager to embrace the opportunity that then offered to plead his passion. From the situation I was unluckily placed in, I perceived no probability of escaping the odious topic, and made up my mind to answer him in a way that must have distressed him, had he an atom of humanity. Lord Budenall observed my embarrassment; and, surmounting the obstacles that confined me prisoner to the Duke, came up to me.

‘Lady

'Lady Julia,' cried he, 'I know you hate *tête-à-têtes*. You never allowed me any, when I had a right to put in my claim to your heart; and I am sure you are no less reluctant to a private conference with the Duke of Suffolk, who must be well informed that it is not *now* to be disposed of.'

'Lord Budenall,' replied the Duke, in a very impatient tone, 'I cannot bear trifling at present—nor do I comprehend your meaning.'

'Really, my Lord,' answered Budenall, 'I am ignorant of the disposition of your Grace's temper at this instant; nor is there a necessity for my studying it. My meaning is this: your Grace and I are alike unfortunate—Lady Julia cannot bestow her affections on either of us—she is attached to a man every way worthy of her. Since I am not so happy as to gain her love, I will aspire to her friendship. Let us, my Lord, mutually endeavour to afford her all the peace we can. It is not in our power to give her to the object of her choice; but it is in our power to refrain from molesting her by declarations that must displease her.'

'And do you suppose,' cried the Duke, 'that I will resign my hopes in favour of a villain?'

'What an expression!' exclaimed Budenall: 'whom can your Grace distinguish with that epithet?'

'The cursed, dissembling Osmond!'

Lord Budenall offered me his hand—

'Lady Julia,' said he, 'allow me to lead you from one, who dares to insult you, by speaking thus of the man heaven has allotted for your partner. I will supply his place in this instance, and protect your delicate feelings from further outrage—And let me warn you, my Lord Duke, to be cautious in future before me, of joining such vile words to a name I respect and esteem. Osmond is my friend; and to defend him I am always ready.'

Suffolk snatched my hand from Lord Budenall, and swore he should not carry me from him in such triumph. He uttered something of vengeance on Budenall.

'Have a care!' exclaimed the other very coolly: 'I may *do the work* more effectually than the Marquis did

did. I have not motives, which he had, to act *merely* on the defensive.—But be less turbulent, my Lord. Are you for ever to be a source of misery to Lady Julia—always to make her the subject of public attention?—You can never compensate for thus terrifying her!’

He led me back to the room I had quitted; and, placing himself near me, apologized for his warmth. I was really frightened—another rencontre I dreaded—and had much reason to apprehend would be the consequence of this quarrel. The Duke of Suffolk spoke with a loud voice. I never saw mortal in such a rage. How hideous did it render his features! Many gentlemen crowded about us, and heard the greatest part of the conversation. I was almost petrified, and incapable of opening my lips.

Some time after the Duke entered the apartment where we were, which was not less full of company than the others. Several persons followed, whose curiosity no doubt made them wish for a similar scene. He approached me—begged me to pardon his violence, which he was penitent for. I bowed to him, but answered not. He turned to Lord Budenall, and entreated him to excuse the offence he had given him. Budenall replied in a polite, though rather distant manner—however, my fears of their meeting in a hostile way were quieted. My brother, I suppose, had advised his friend to this mode of conduct; for Suffolk’s haughty spirit but ill brooks humiliation.

As soon as we got into the coach to return home, Almeria condemned the Duke’s rash behaviour in warm terms. Lady Pemberton was at cards at the time, and could only hear a confused murmur of what had passed, which ran through the apartments very expeditiously. She desired to have the particulars—Almeria gave them. My mother said Lord Budenall was very much in fault—that he had no right to irritate Suffolk by mentioning Lord Osmond.

‘Indeed, Madam,’ cried I, ‘I had best remain always at home—to do so agrees with my inclination.

When

When I am abroad, if Lord Osmond chances to be talked of, I must endure ill treatment from the Duke—however, it cannot fail drawing contempt on himself from many. It is true, he has held me up to the public in colours not much to my credit. I fear, I am regarded as a vain, dangerous girl, who delights in fomenting quarrels, and glories in occasioning bloodshed.'—

Almeria declared such censure would be unreasonable: that it could not be supposed I should marry the Duke, to prevent his fighting with every man that spoke to me.

'One good attends these disputes,' said I: 'they convince the world that he is obnoxious to me, else there would be no necessity for his giving rise to them.'

Lady Pemberton, in an angry tone, asked Almeria, if she had been brought over to Osmond's party? 'I am of no party, Madam,' replied she: 'I wish my sister happy; and will confess to your Ladyship, that of late I have thought Suffolk wants delicacy to make her so—but I by no means conclude that a son of Westmorland's can do it.'

My mother excused Suffolk, and said she would reproach him for the disturbance he had caused the first time they met.

'I beg you will not, Madam,' exclaimed I: 'to what purpose? If my family thinks slightly of such insolence, I assure you, I can bear it patiently—he will not long have it at his option to exercise it.'

The carriage stopped, and the discourse ended.

Yesterday morning, whilst we were at breakfast, Suffolk and Lord Pemberton came in. When the things were removed, I was retiring to my closet—my brother followed and led me back.

'Upon my soul, Julia, you shall stay.'

'Why, my Lord?'

'You must hear Suffolk;' and he held my hands to detain me.

'Do not oblige me to contradict you peremptorily!'

‘That you must not do, Julia,’ cried Lady Pemberton; ‘for I insist that you stay.’

I curtsied to her, and resumed my seat. They left me with the Duke, who placed himself near me. He attempted to take my hand—I withheld it from his touch in a manner that evinced my displeasure, and put him out of countenance. However, I was condemned to listen to the repetition of a subject, which had but too often created much uneasiness in my breast.

I told him that it was impossible for any man of sensibility to persevere in addressing a woman, who had on every occasion given him the strongest testimony of her disapprobation. If his Grace really felt the disinterested love he professed, he would act very differently—he would pay a little regard to my happiness, and cease to disturb it by a continuance of assiduities that were highly disgusting. I said, I should be sorry to treat him unpolitely; but, as I had more than once declared my inability to reward his passion, and he still presented me with the theme, I would tell him very plainly that my heart was actually devoted to another, and that it was my fixed determination never to marry any but my Lord Osmond; a piece of information that I hoped his good sense would consider rightly of, and free me from further importunity. He seemed ready to fly out. He got up with much emotion, walked hastily to the window, and as hastily returned to his seat—his countenance was pale with anger.

‘It is in vain, my Lord,’ cried I, ‘to alter my resolution—your rage cannot make me give him up!—whilst I have life, he will never be less dear to me.’

My brother came in, and the Duke (as if he wished to draw on me his displeasure) repeated what I had said. ‘Then, Julia,’ exclaimed Lord Pemberton, ‘you shall never marry!’

‘I am well apprized of that, my Lord,’ replied I: ‘but since I am debarred of the man I love, I beg I may not be tormented by the man I am averse to. Observe, my Lord Duke, you have my full answer. Presume not to mention this topic to me again; but avoid me as studiously as I will you.’

He

He reproached me for my cruelty—demanded if I had no pity for his sufferings?—and appealed to my brother whether he had not demonstrated his attachment by the most convincing proofs?

‘Your Grace must allow me to say,’ cried I, ‘on that head, you had best be silent. The methods you used to demonstrate it, are dreadful to my imagination. You sought the destruction of Lord Osmond—you exposed my character to the censure of illiberal people, by making me the occasion of your duel—in all companies you render me the subject of dissention, and the innocent disturber of harmony—these are the only proofs you have given of your attachment, my Lord—and they had better never be revived!—In your presence, that you may be assured I am thoroughly in earnest, I must desire my brother to trouble me no further respecting you, lest I might be tempted to lament my too scrupulous adherence to his will. The sad reward I meet, may create some regrets in my breast, for having paid so high a regard to duty; and it is not improbable, but that I shall wish myself away from my family, sheltered in the protection of him who prefers my happiness to his own.’

‘*Your too scrupulous adherence to my will, Julia?*’

‘Yes, my Lord—in not consenting to measures which would have prevented my being so unkindly persecuted.’

My brother seemed thunderstruck with what I had said; and, far from discovering any wrath, which I expected, appeared softened by the tears I could not refrain from shedding.—I was going up to my apartment, when I met Lady Pemberton. She desired me to return; and, after hearing a very fair relation from Lord Pemberton of all that I had said, laid her commands on me (as I have already told you) to banish Lord Osmond from my thoughts. The Duke looked transported; and hoped I would pardon him for swearing that he would not take my refusal—but that the exulting Osmond should have his heart’s blood ere he obtained me. My countenance, I believe, was ex-

pressive of the contempt I held him in. I replied not, but left the room.

My brother is suddenly called into Hertfordshire on business that will detain him there a fortnight. He leaves town to-morrow. In his absence, I will endeavour to prevail on my mother to put a period to Suffolk's addresses——Lord Pemberton influences her too much. Surely, Louisa, it will be but just to grant my desire, since she has nothing to reproach me with in my conduct towards Lord Osmond!

I cannot describe my concern for the unhappy Charlotte Pelham's connections. I never thought her principles so bad. All the malice I bear her is to wish she may soon be sensible of her guilt, and make all the atonement in her power, by restoring to the unfortunate woman she has injured Mr. Belmont's affections.——

This instant we are informed that my dearest Caroline is taken ill—Lady Pemberton is hurrying to her—I can write no more—I can only implore the Almighty, of his infinite mercy, to spare her to us—Oh, my admirable Caroline!

* * * * *

After having put a negative on your request, I almost tremble for the fate of my poor letter—however, the last paragraph shall protect it from becoming the victim of your displeasure, for I think you will peruse it with joy——Lady Pemberton has just sent to acquaint Almeria and me, that my sister is safe, and the mother of a fine boy.

I am, dear Louisa,

Most affectionately yours,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady Dowager PEMBERTON.

THE morning on which I left London, my dear Madam, Lord Clermont called upon me. I was surprized at so early a visit, and yet more at the embarrassed air he wore. After some little hesitation, he avowed a passion for Almeria; and desired to know whether he had my approbation to propose to your Ladyship for her? I told him that he had, and hinted a supposition that he was assured of being well received by my sister, previous to his taking such a step. He answered, that he had addressed her, and, though not absolutely accepted as a lover, he flattered himself that under your sanction he might have hopes of conciliating her affections. He spoke to me of a settlement which was noble; and added, that, when I returned, his rental should be laid open for my inspection. If I thought his fortune admitted of a more ample provision for Almeria than he had mentioned, he would most readily agree to make any addition I pleased.

I replied that the settlement he offered was infinitely beyond what her fortune entitled us to expect—he interrupted me—

‘I do not, my Lord, regard her fortune. I wish to provide for her as my wife!’

I admired his generosity—his candour; but begged him to be persuaded, we were not less liberal in our notions, and should set great limits to his disinterested proposal.

I like him much—his morals are good, so is his temper—He is sensible, lively, elegant, and well descended. I do not see one objection to him—but your Ladyship and Almeria can best determine, whether he is to be encouraged or not.

Would you pointed of to the man we both recommend to her!—It is in vain to hope for it!—So invincible an aversion as she has to him, never before prepossessed the heart of woman!—I really feel most sensibly her melancholy

lancholy situation, be it owing to perverseness, or whatever motive. The consequence I fear will be painful, and we shall soon have her loss to deplore.—An amiable, charming girl, to be suddenly snatched from connections equally and tenderly attached to her, and who have yet the power to ward off so fatal a calamity,—calls for many serious reflections—Had Westmorland less pride—would he seek the alliance for his son, and receive Julia as a favour from our hands—why we might be prevailed upon to give her to Osmond, since it is plain her happiness depends entirely upon him.—Ten thousand daggers are planted in my breast, when I look forward to the misery we shall be overwhelmed in by her death; yet the diabolical Westmorland is so haughty—so overbearing—it is madness to entertain a notion of his doing what alone could make her wife to the man she loves!

I spent the evening prior to my leaving town *tête-à-tête* with Mortimer, and was infinitely delighted at hearing from him many instances of Julia's conduct, (whilst separated from us, and wholly at her own disposal,) that excited my admiration of her probity—her fortitude, and her sense of duty. I will communicate them to you when I have the honour of seeing you. Mortimer, Caroline, and Sir Charles Montague, you will deem wrong in many parts of my recital—yet, as their behaviour was the engine which now discovers Julia in the brilliant light she stands, I must bespeak your Ladyship's indulgence towards them.

I told Suffolk he would do well to drop his suit for a while, as Julia is really in a condition which requires that her mind should be kept composed; and, if we passively admitted of its being made otherwise, the imputation of barbarity would very justly rest with us. He was displeased with me and declared he was incensed at a cruel selfishness I imputed to him. This nature. However, his situation demands many allowances; and I am persuaded, could she be prevailed on to marry him, he would render her felicity complete. We cannot sufficiently regret her ever seeing Osmond

—still

—still he is a man, that, abstracted from prejudice, no one can find a blemish in!—His destiny is unhappy—the rigour with which he is treated by his vile father, merits compassion. I forgive the trouble he has occasioned us, when I reflect how severely he has suffered from it, in every point.

I hope Caroline and her little one go on well! Farewel, my dear Madam. I shall be kept here a week or ten days longer than I expected, which by no means accords with my inclination. Embrace your coterie for your Ladyship's

Most respectfully affectionate

And devoted servant,

PEMBERTON.

To Lady WESTBROOK.

Portman-Square.

YOU indulged me greatly, my amiable friend, when you desired me to write to you frequently. Your tenderness I have often experienced—your sympathy has as often soothed my spirits, when they have been sadly agitated—and the interest you so kindly take in all that concerns me, excites every sentiment of gratitude, and entitles you to my full confidence. I momentarily lament your departure from London; but I admire the motive which carried you and Sir James from the gay scenes that it now exhibits. It must have been very melancholy for Lady Caroline to have passed two tedious months in the country at this dreary season, deprived of her sweet companion, whose loss she could not have supplied. Pray tell her that I entreat she may not suffer the disagreeable business which called her away, to detain her in Kent beyond the limited time.

You will no doubt remember, my dear Lady Westbrook, a wish I more than once expressed in your presence to Caroline, of making the Duke of Westmorland a promise, that I thought would be to the advantage of Lord Osmond. You both endeavoured to dissuade me from such a promise: I saw it was in vain to contend the matter, and dropped it for the present. On my arrival in London, I found my mother and Lord Pemberton as inflexibly determined as ever to have no alliance with the Marquis—She forbade me to think more of him. I found the time approaching fast for the Duke's solemnizing a marriage, that was to be destructive to my Osmond's future hopes,—I found (by far the least painful part) that I was hastening to the grave. Again I consulted Caroline, and begged, if she could allege any good reason, why I should not execute my scheme, to do it without hesitation. She had none to offer that did not appear futile—still by some method or other, she detained me from adopting the necessary measures much longer than I liked. A few days ago I formed my resolution—I considered every point deliberately—and, after revolving in my mind the steps proper to be taken, I went to my mother, and told her what I meditated doing. She was astonished at the courage of such a proceeding, but seemed at a loss how to answer me.

'Your Ladyship,' cried I, 'cannot let your aversion arrive at so great a length, as to wish that Lord Osmond should be rendered unfortunate in each sense that wretchedness can approach him, on my account. By vowing to the Duke never to marry his son, the only colour of displeasure he has against him, must be removed—His Grace will perhaps break off his own match—Lord Osmond will be restored to his just expectations—your Ladyship and my brother will be satisfied that I have put it out of my own power to become the wife of a man you both hold in so much abhorrence—and I shall be more at rest in the reflection of not having injured him in every respect.' My mother desired I would let her see the letter before it was sent. I well
knew

knew the motive—she was apprehensive I should hurt the family pride by using too humiliating terms. I wrote as follows:

To the Duke of WESTMORLAND.

My Lord,

IT is with every sentiment of disgust that the world beholds your treatment of Lord Osmond—It is with every emotion of grief I in particular am constrained to view such unparalleled inhumanity, since I have been, in a chief measure, the innocent cause of its exertion on an amiable and noble heart.

I love Lord Osmond, my Lord—my friends disapprove of his alliance—Lord Osmond returns perhaps too warmly the tenderness I feel.—You have expressed your hatred to such a connection—you have driven him from your sight, and withdrawn from him the blessings of a father—you swear to deprive him of his native inheritance, and all because he has dared to love!—What aggravates the fault—he has presumed to elect an object out of a family that your Grace (allow me to think from no just cause) has taken an aversion to—Love, my Lord, is voluntary. Had he married indeed without your consent, you might have had a shade of reason for such a conduct; but alas! you cannot even allege that offence, to excuse a want of paternal feeling.

Recal the Marquis to your arms, my Lord—restore him to the favour of your smiles—dispossess him not of the opulent fortune his birth and his merit claim—Grant me a promise to this effect, and your Grace shall receive from me in return a solemn abjuration of my hopes—I will vow never to wed him without the mutual approbation of his, and of my family—I will vow to become a voluntary sacrifice for his benefit.

Believe me, my Lord, such a mode of acting will re-instate you in the good opinion of mankind, will confirm to you the duty and affection of Lord Osmond—will, above all, reconcile you to your own heart,

250 MASQUERADES; OR,
which surely is the first of motives—and will for ever
oblige,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

Most obedient

Humble servant,

JULIA HERBERT.

When I had finished my letter, I carried it to Lady Pemberton. She perused it two or three times; then said, she wished I would make my mind easy, and postpone sending of it till my brother came to town. I should not wait long, as she expected him in two or three days. I could do nothing but acquiesce, though inwardly reluctant, that he was to be dictator on the occasion; judging of the probability there was from thence, of its not being sent at all. Lord Pemberton did not arrive in London before last night, and this morning breakfasted with us. My mother gave him the letter. After reading it attentively, he asked whether I really meant to act up to the contents of it? I replied, most undoubtedly I should.

'Then,' cried my Lord, 'if it will give you the least satisfaction that Westmorland should receive it, let it be dispatched to him immediately. Who knows, Madam,' addressing my mother, 'what effect it may produce!'

I was astonished—I knew not what my brother could suppose. Lady Pemberton was silent. The servant who carried the letter to Grosvenor-Square, found his Grace at home; and, after being detained half an hour, was told, 'It required no answer.' My brother had waited the footman's return: he bore this piece of unpoliteness with more moderation than I could have expected—he looked at me, I thought, with compassion.

'Julia

‘Julia may yet have an answer,’ cried Lady Pemberton; ‘he requires time to deliberate.’

‘I don’t believe she will, Madam,’ replied my brother. ‘Westmorland is a contemptible wretch, and you should despise him, Julia. You have a specimen of the insolence, with which you would have been treated, had you become his daughter.’

‘I should not have been in his power, my Lord; and I am well assured Osmond is incapable of using any creature ill.’

‘Why faith I fancy so too—but encourage not a hope of him: it will avail nothing.’ Here the subject rested.

Lady Mortimer is once more at liberty to go abroad: however, she uses that privilege with moderation. My mother this night receives masks, previous to their appearance at Almack’s.—No entreaties could prevail on Caroline to come to us. Her Lord is as domestic as she is. They are equally delighted with their son, and seem the happiest people in the world.

I will keep my letter open two or three days, hoping in that time the Duke of Westmorland will answer my request, and I may be able to acquaint you of the success of my project.

* * * * *

Thursday Morning.

Between ten and eleven last night, our apartments were thronged—I was conversing with Sir Charles Montague, when one in a hermit’s dress approached me, and in a feigned voice, which I could not once catch off its guard, chid me for suffering my heart to be so much attached to the alluring pleasures of the town. I heard him a long time without interrupting him: he painted the frivolity of such amusements, and bad me strive to wean myself from them.

‘Your opinion of me is erroneous, my good father,’ exclaimed I: ‘such pleasures as you call alluring, I despise.’

He shook his head——

‘Can

‘Can you be really sincere?—Some happy fellow then engages you to meet him in the round of dissipation which you tread with unwearied steps!’

I appealed to Sir Charles; but, on turning my head, perceived he had left my side. I cleared myself of the accusation.—I said, that, when my mother insisted on my attendance in public, I certainly had no option——‘But,’ added I, ‘supposing I was at my own disposal, to refrain from joining her and my sisters in the common diversions of the place, must appear very particular, and the height of affectation in me. What would you have me do? It is from such as dedicate themselves to holy contemplation—who view dispassionately the calamities and lucky incidents of busy life, we children of the world may hope to learn the doctrine of wisdom. Instruct me in this point how to act.’

‘Devote your thoughts to love, fair daughter,’ replied he: ‘fly from this metropolis—fly to the arms of an ardent lover, who gives up all for your sake—who receives no’——

‘Your course is pernicious!’ returned I: ‘you assume that habit to be less suspected, and to seduce more easily. It is not the office of a Hermit to advise children to swerve from duty.’

I was about to leave him—he caught my hand—he trembled whilst he held it—

‘Pardon me,’ said he: ‘your notions are too rigid. The interest I take in my friend’s misfortunes, accounts for the advice I give. Did he participate of your amusements, I could not object to your enjoying the gay scenes of London; but I fear in his absence they only dazzle your senses, and leave him but little room in your thoughts. Besides, some fluttering, brilliant coxcomb, with nothing to recommend him but what he derives from the appendages of a handsome figure, and a high title, might make his way good to that gentle breast!’

‘You must be an utter stranger to me by judging thus of my sentiments; therefore I forgive you.—But when you return to your hermitage, learn to divest yourself of prejudice, and believe that it is not incompatible

compatible with the nature of a woman, to look beyond the charms of person and precedence in her choice of a lover.'

A shepherd came up to us, whom I knew to be Suffolk.

'Father,' cried he, you have not forsworn every gratification I perceive—you still delight in viewing a beautiful object. I beg of your charity to inform this fair maid, how abominable a crime it is to be cruel—convince her of the charge she lies under to Heaven, for the pangs she gives its creatures—a charge she must one day answer—and then she will sorely grieve for having been guilty of my death in particular.'

'Ah, my daughter,' exclaimed the Anchorite, 'beware of cruelty! This fine form, these lovely features, must all undergo a change unheeded by you in this blooming age. Beauty was not given you for the purpose of breaking hearts!'

'The mean share I have, father, was given me for the purpose of rewarding one tender, faithful heart, and no more—was it not?'

'Indisputably!'

'Well, the person who possesses that heart, and mine also, is far—very far from Portman-square just now! Charity could no longer be a commendable virtue, did it oblige me to administer to another's happiness with the total privation of my own. Prevail therefore on this mask to accompany you back to your solitude—there instruct him on the refinements that ever attend a sincere passion—and then he will blush at sounding in my ears a subject he has long known I am not at liberty to listen to, and which is repugnant to my inclinations.'

He was about to answer, when Fidele ran into the room, and, almost bounding into the Hermit's arms, testified such joy and transport as I am unable to describe. I was surprised at it; and still more at hearing the mask exclaim, 'Poor Fidele!' However, it corroborated my conjecture, that the fictitious recluse was no other than Mr. Montague, who recognised the little

the greyhound.——Do you know, I was half jealous of the animal's bestowing caresses on any but his Lord and myself? I took him from the mask—I kissed his head, and inveigled him not to be so eager to return to the stranger—but he regained him from my arms—he pressed Fidele to his bosom—he was extravagant in his fondness of him——

‘How happy is this creature!’ he exclaimed.

‘Happy indeed!’ echoed Suffolk: ‘I often wish to be Fidele.’

‘Would you not consent to part with him, Madam,’ demanded the Hermit, ‘to one who will idolize him on your account?’

I trembled at the question——

‘No, Sir,’ replied I; ‘I would not part with him for worlds!——No consideration could tempt me to it.’

The mask snatched my hand, and eagerly pressed it—I was so apprehensive of losing Fidele, that the first moment which offered I took him from the Hermit, and carried him to my closet, where I committed him to the strict care of Mournies.

Soon after I returned, I asked Sir Charles (whom I saw speak for some minutes with the mask) to inform me of his name.

‘It is not in my power,’ answered he—‘but I believe it is Sedley.’

‘How should Mr. Sedley know Fidele?’ cried I—and I mentioned the circumstance I have just related.

‘Oh, he was acquainted with your little favourite,’ replied he, ‘before you saw him; and Fidele is not *fine* enough to aim at the appearance of losing his memory.’

In a short time the company dispersed, and I saw no more of the hermit.

To morrow-night Lady Louisa Montague gives a masked ball. Neither the Mortimer’s, my brother, nor his wife, mean to be at it. Lord Pemberton is prevented by a cold, and Sophia will not go without him. I did hope for the Duke of Suffolk’s absence also—but Louisa tells me he in a jocular manner hinted

to her his despair of receiving an invitation ; and begged to know, whether he should *much offend her*, if without one he presumed to intrude himself amongst her guests ? She was obliged, through politeness, to send him a card the next day.



Saturday.

I will recite distinctly the occurrences of last night, and leave you to determine whether I have cause or not to be perplexed.

Almeria and I, habited as girls of Patmos, attended Lady Pemberton to Cumberland-street. We had scarcely entered the first apartment, when two masks seized a hand of each. One was a harlequin, whom my sister, no doubt, knew to be Lord Clermont ; the other was a scolding old woman, that was very vociferous in accusing me of coquetry. I had neither spirits nor inclination to answer, and, taking my mother's arm, broke from the disgusting figure—However, I found it impossible to get free—the old woman followed, and addressed me in a manner that diverted Lady Pemberton, who asked me why I appeared as miserable at such a festive scene, as if I was following a corpse ? She told me the humorous mask was Mr. Bishop, and begged me to join my sister, whilst she endeavoured to find out the Duke of Northington, to whom she had a message from my brother. I obeyed ; and discovered Almeria standing with her partner amongst the dancers in the great room. The disagreeable old woman pursued me thither ; and was growing wonderfully troublesome, when a magician interfered, and bade Mr. *Ainsley* direct his wit at an object who might admire it more than I seemed to do. He returned an answer bordering on insolence, and attempted to throw his arm round my waist. The magician caught him by the shoulder, and, giving him a sudden whirl, caused him to stagger many yards from the place where I stood. Mr. Ainsley (for he I suppose it was) precipitately

tately retreated from the shouts of laughter that resounded through the apartment. We saw no more of the hideous figure. I thanked the magician for his good-natured and timely relief.

‘I perceived, by the power of my art,’ cried he, ‘what passed in your soul, and in your tormentor’s. You was distressed at the impertinent nonsense she uttered: she was forming a scheme of bringing you into the fashionable paper of the morning, in a manner not greatly to your satisfaction. There is no exertion of skill required to silence such old women. I should be happy to employ my talents in a far higher cause. I will convene all the loves—the soft desires—and extatic transports around you—I will thaw that bosom, as cold and as spotless as the new-fallen snow—I will oblige it to melt at the earnest solicitations of the most ardent lover that ever breathed a sigh’—

‘Are you not the Duke of Suffolk?’

‘If that name is hateful to you—no.’

‘I know you too well, my Lord; and am ingenuous enough to confess, that you are the last man in the world I would receive the slightest service from—however I thank you once more for ridding me of Mr. Ainsley.’

I was hastening from him—he stepped after me—

‘By heaven I am not Suffolk!’

‘Well, may be so! but, as long as I retain the least suspicion that you are, your conversation must be shunned by me.’

‘Stay, sweet Julia!—suppose—suppose this mask dropped—and you discovered the features of Osmond—say—would you pardon his temerity?’

He seemed agitated—he pressed my hand to his bosom—I started—how can I tell you the various sensations that possessed my heart in the course of one moment! At length I recollected that this was an artifice—an inhuman artifice of the Duke’s, to deceive me into a belief that he was Osmond—to find on what foot we were—and to be treated very differently by me under that character, than he would be in his own. I withdrew my hand hastily.

‘Was

'Was I mistaken before, this last indelicate, illuſory interrogation, would be ſufficient to prove you no other than the Duke of Suffolk. Away, my Lord! and be careful, till you bring your ſentiments to be ſomething ſimilar to Lord Oſmond's, not to diſgrace his name by borrowing it.'

'I quitted him immediately, and had the ſatisfaction, in a quarter of an hour, to ſee him retire from the apartments. I ſat a good while in converſation with Lady Percival, my mother, and Lord Budenall, when a gentleman, in the drefs of Murphy's Hamet, asked me to dance a minuet. I reſuſed. Lady Pemberton deſired him to perſevere in his entreaty till I conſented. There was no more to be ſaid. I aroſe, and he led me to the room appropriated to minuets. As we entered, Sir Charles Montague met me.

'Whom have you got there?' whiſpered he.

'Indeed, I do not know,' answered I.

'You are not engaged to him for the night I hope.'

I replied in the negative.

'That is well—let no ſollicitation induce you to give your hand to any partner, but the one I have provided for you.'

It was time to begin before I could ask whom he had reſerved for me? As ſoon as the minuet ended, he approached me, followed by as elegant a figure as my eyes ever beheld, in the habit of Jachimo. Sir Charles introduced him to me with this ſentence:

'Honour by your notice Lord Oſmond's and my very particular friend—in diſtinguiſhing Mr. Sedley you will oblige us both!'

Never, Lady Weſtbrook, did I ſee ſo ſtrong a reſemblance as his perſon bore to the Marquis's—his manner—his addreſs, were ſtrongly represented in this ſtranger's—his voice indeed differed—but I thought it affected—and the thickneſs with which he ſpoke managed by a trifling ſtratagem. I felt ſick. I complained of the heat of the room—took off my maſk—and was forced to ſit down. Sir Charles and Mr. Sedley (for ſo I am to call him, they tell me) were all
attention.

attention. The latter threw open a sash near me—he procured some volatiles, and held them to my nose. His benevolence was very amiable, and rendered him yet more like my Lord. In a few minutes I was as well as ever. Mr. Sedley retired a few paces—I could not avoid whispering Sir Charles.

‘Sure it is Osmond’s self!’

He laughed——

‘Entertain that notion, and you will pass some hours agreeably. To help the illusion, he shall not unmask: for, were you to see his face, you would scarcely compare him to Osmond—it is as rough and uncouth as his figure is elegant.’

‘I wonder he did not withdraw his mask, Sir Charles, when you presented him to me!’

‘Oh, the fellow has vanity! I will lay any wager that he conceals his features from you as long as he can—but I must flatter him, by mentioning the resemblance you discover.’

Sir Charles waited not my reply—he joined Mr. Sedley, and appeared highly diverted whilst he communicated something to him. They both came up to me, and Mr. Sedley entreated I would not deny him the honour of being my partner. I pleaded want of health, and declared my intention was to avoid dancing.

‘If you do,’ said Montague, ‘your situation must be most unpleasant—Suffolk will be continually at your elbow.’

‘Oh, no!’ exclaimed I, ‘he is gone—I shall see no more of him this night, I trust!’

Sir Charles was called aside. Mr. Sedley asked, if I really meant not to dance? I answered that I could not possibly, for the reason I had alledged. He said it was so important a one, that he would not for the world press me to alter my resolution. He seated himself near me, and seemed desirous of entering into conversation; but it was not to be effected from the continual interruption that we had. A Lady in the dress of a *Paisanne* approached Mr. Sedley—

‘Good

'Good God,' cried she, 'is it actually true that you are returned! How long has your Lordship been in England?'

He assured her that she mistook him.

'No,' replied she; 'that I certainly do not—it is impossible to mistake Lord Osmond.'

'Lord Osmond is in Switzerland,' said he; 'but we have often been addressed for each other!'

'Lord Osmond never did exist, if you are not he!' she answered:—'perhaps you have a motive for wishing to be concealed—Well I am enough your friend and Lady Julia's, to keep the secret! Do not be afraid of finding in me a second Charlotte Pelham.'

She turned from us. I was amazingly embarrassed, and began a second time to think it was indeed the Marquis. I arose instantly to go in search of Louisa: I had not advanced ten yards before my hand was seized by Sir Charles Montague.

'What have you done with Sedley, Lady Julia?'

'With Sedley!' repeated I: 'can I be so easily imposed upon, do you think?'

'Why what do you suppose?'

'That you have deceived me, Sir Charles.'

He blushed, and hastily drew aside. I was afraid I had offended him: however, I proceeded, and after much trouble found Louisa. I conjured her to tell me whether my suspicions were not well grounded? She assumed an air of astonishment, and then laughed at me. I informed her that I was not singular in my conjecture, and related what had passed between the friend of Sir Charles and the Paisanne.

'I do not deny, my dear,' cried she, 'that there is a similitude in Mr. Sedley's person to Lord Osmond's, but surely not so great a one as you say!—I will let you into a secret, Julia—Mr. Sedley is an illegitimate son of Westmorland's; so there is nothing extraordinary in the likeness you perceive.—But pray discard these doubts; they are absurd beyond measure; and if they

I blushed at my ~~were you~~ have lost your senses!' already given her and Sir Charles room for the same.

As

As I returned to the principal apartment, I met Mr. Sedley and the Paisanne together. She ran up to me, took hold of my arm, and led me aside—

‘Pardon me, Lady Julia,’ said she, ‘for distressing you as I did involuntarily. I really thought you Jachimo was Lord Osmond: however, I am convinced of my error—I made him unmask—and I am persuaded there is not another man in the world who can shew such a face!’

‘What is it so frightful?’

‘If you wish not to be shocked, avoid gratifying your curiosity.’

She hurried away, and Mr. Sedley joined me.

‘The Paisanne is at length satisfied of her mistake, Sir,’ cried I.

Oh yes,’ replied he, ‘at the expense of beholding a very ugly countenance. The agreeable Paisanne is Lady Maria Harley, I find.’

A person in the dress of a Haduke drew near.

‘I would give a thousand guineas,’ exclaimed he to Mr. Sedley, ‘to be better acquainted with you. I like your spirit. I heard you answer the Turk who supposed you to be Lord Osmond, in a manner that does you honour. Prithee, my good Jachimo, let me see whether in the tawny complexion you resemble your countrymen!’

Mr. Sedley seemed to take no notice of this familiar address, but continued to speak to me of the Paisanne. The mask would not be disregarded—he laid his hand upon Mr. Sedley’s shoulder.

‘If you wish to attain happiness with this young creature, who surpasses Shakespear’s Imogen in beauty, I will inform you of a secure method to gain her, provided I know whom I shall oblige. She is not deaf to persuasion’—

‘Do you hint, Sir,’ cried Sedley, ‘that you have experienced her flexibility?’

‘By no means—charming as she is, I never gave myself the trouble to assail her. But view, I intimated—those lips—those cheeks? They clearly prove that she

She can, not only give happiness to,—but receive it from a lover.—Come, come, allow me to see your face!

‘I will certainly shew it to you,’ replied Sedley, ‘if you make it necessary.—Stand off, Sir! and offend this Lady and me no further with your discourse.’

‘Upon my soul,’ exclaimed the Duke, ‘I believe you are Lord Osmond.’

‘Suppose I am, Sir—Did you, or any man ever discover Osmond backward in chastising impertinence?—Have a care! I may be found very like him in that respect.’

The mask turned away muttering. I told Mr. Sedley he was too hasty—

‘Not at all,’ answered he. ‘I saw him and Suffolk in close conference—the Duke asked me one or two unreasonable questions—and, dissatisfied at not being able to find out who I am, dispatched this puppy on that errand.’

‘I thought the Duke was gone.’

‘He has changed his dress, I suppose—He now appears as a Turk, and is unmasked—there he stands—observe the embarrassment pictured on his countenance—he fancies I am the Marquis.’

Some minutes after Mr. Montague joined us.

‘Sedley,’ cried he, ‘if Jack Ainsley had a spark of courage, he would acknowledge that you have affronted him. He is in a desperate rage, and I overheard him making a complaint to the Duke of your ill-breeding. His Grace bid him resent it—No, he answered; such a fellow was only worthy of contempt—besides your language was merely unpolite, not insolent.’

They both laughed heartily—my mother beckoned to me: I went up to her.

‘Who is that gentleman, Julia?’

‘An absolute stranger to me, Madam—his name is Sedley.’

She seemed contented, and, no doubt, set the Duke’s mind at ease; for he never once approached me, or Mr. Sedley, who left my side very seldom. He spoke much

much of his friend—described his passion with an energy that I imagined could only flow from the lips of my dear Lord. I told him that he was certainly himself a lover.

‘I am indeed!’ replied he. ‘I have felt all the agonies of suspense—of separation—and sometimes the transport of being admitted to the presence of her I adore. Ah, Lady Julia, did you love in the hundredth degree that Osmond and I do, you would suffer him to unite every affectionate title to you in that of husband! Instead of feasting his eyes on an inanimate piece of painting—instead of clasping it to his heart, and committing a thousand extravagances—you would allow him to bestow those caresses on an object dearer to him than it is in the possibility of words to tell.’

‘If Lord Osmond,’ cried I, ‘considered the affair properly, he could not think that I betrayed a want of attachment to him, in refusing to deviate from the duty I owe my mother. The daughter who loses sight of the moral obligations a parent exacts, may justly be suspected of paying no regard to the vows she makes her husband—But I do not rightly understand you: what piece of painting do you mean?’

He took my hand:

‘Sweet arguer! your gentle manner of determining every claim I make to’—

I thought him too free—withdrew my hand—and repeated my question. He answered hastily,

‘The picture I wear next my heart.’

‘How!’ exclaimed I; ‘Lord Osmond has nothing to do with that!—Sure he is not become your rival!’

He hesitated.

‘I beg pardon—did you not ask what bit of painting I wore?’

‘Good heaven, Sir, no! I am ignorant of your having any miniature; nor should I be so curious.’

‘The Marquis, Madam, is happy enough to possess your picture—can you be sorry for it? It is the greatest consolation a lover can have in the absence of his mistress!’

‘I believe,

‘I believe, Sir, you must be mistaken—I never gave him’—

‘No—you were not so kind; but your amiable sister was. Tell me, do you regret it?’

‘Indeed I do not—I am pleased he has any-thing to remind him of his Julia. You may imagine, Mr. Sedley, that I am blameable in owning my affection for the Marquis so unreservedly; but his merit justifies my choice—and I would make it known, that to no other man will I ever give my hand, convinced at the same time that I shall never have it in my power to present it to him.’

Mr. Sedley was agitated—he left me abruptly—but in a few minutes returned—

‘The interest I take in Osmond’s happiness, Lady Julia,’ cried he, ‘must account to you for the feelings I cannot help testifying—yet surely you are too obstinate—some scruples might be sacrificed to so faithful, so sincere a lover. Heaven demands not of us to become’—

‘I must not hear you on this head: your sophistry may add to my wretchedness, but cannot change my resolution.’

Sir Charles Montague, Lord Beaumont, and Lord Budenall, interrupted us; and I had very little conversation further with Mr. Sedley, who still hovered near me. I asked Sir Charles if he was angry with me? He smiled—

‘Not in the least—you must be sure by this time, that you injured me in the thought you expressed.’—We had no formal supper, but side-boards furnished with every delicacy that could be fancied. Mr. Sedley begged to hold my gloves whilst I tasted some fruit. Soon after I demanded them: he pretended to look for them—made me many apologies for his carelessness—and hoped I was provided with another pair. I assured him I was not. ‘How unlucky!’ cried he, ‘they have certainly been stolen from me.’ He affected to be extremely solicitous to find them; but without success. When the moment arrived for our departure, he took my hand. We were following
Lady

Lady Pemberton and Lord Budenall out of the apartments, when Mr. Montague stopped us. He had a message to Mr. Sedley from Lady Louisa; and whilst he delivered it, Lord Clermont and Almeria passed by—in short, before Mr. Montague could receive an answer, I was left several yards behind my mother and sister. As we descended the stair-case, Mr. Sedley pressed my hand to his bosom—he sighed, and attempted under the curtain of his mask to kiss it. I snatched it from him—and evinced my displeasure. That availed nothing; in spite of my resistance, he again seized it, and carried it to his lips.

‘You do not know me, Sir,’ cried I. ‘These liberties—you forget your friend—you forget’—

‘Ah, my Julia—my ever-dearest Julia!’ exclaimed he, in the natural voice of Osmond. Dear Emily, what a situation was I in!—Time admitted no more—in an instant I found myself in the coach—I saw him disappear—I knew not what to imagine.

‘Upon my word, Julia,’ said Almeria, as we drove off, ‘you have the luck of attracting all the *elegants*!—Why this stranger is enchanting!—I wish he had bestowed the attention on me, that he paid to you—you were insensible to it; I should have been delighted—Oh Lord, I am in love with Mr. Sedley!’

I was too much distressed to answer her rally.

‘He is amazingly like Lord Osmond,’ cried Lady Pemberton; ‘don’t you think he is, Julia?’

‘So much so, Madam,’ answered I, ‘that at this minute I can hardly believe it is any other than the Marquis.’

‘Indeed!’ returned my mother—she paused—
‘Your ingenuity is praise-worthy!—But, my dear, if the person you suspect was really Osmond, he certainly would have discovered himself to you. Give up that idea, Julia; for Maria Harley told me she saw his face, and it is a horrible one.’

‘Oh, then I am cured!’ exclaimed Almeria: ‘I wish I had known it sooner; I should not have treated Lord Clermont so ill.’

I am

I am strangely perplexed, Lady Westbrook. One moment I am persuaded that I have conversed with Osmond; the next I reflect on the many circumstances that happened, which exterminate that belief. I saw Sir Charles and Louisa this morning: I mentioned the incident that passed as Mr. Sedley led me to the carriage, and insisted on their informing me whether Lord Osmond did not borrow that name. They turned my question into such ridicule, that I repented having put it to them. I beg of you, my amiable Emily, to tell me whether the Marquis is in England—if he is, I am sure you and Sir James must know it. I have been thus particular, to convince you that my surmises are at least formed from striking appearances.

I have received no answer from the Duke of Westmorland; and from thence I lose all hope of his acting with justice towards his son.

Adieu, my dear Lady Westbrook. Write soon, and think me

Your affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir JAMES WESTEROOK.

Cumberland-Sire

YES, Westbrook, I have indeed seen and conversed with my charming Julia: I have obtained proofs of her attachment beyond expression grateful, whilst she imagined me very distant from her.—You think my scheme romantic, you say. It may be so; but it affords me a large share of happiness.—I would not for worlds create the least anxiety in Julia's breast.—Should you be known, her family must suppose her accessary to your concealment. Should she hear of your return, she will avoid you. I condemn your measures, and fear you may have reason to repent of them.—

them.'—No, dear Westbrook; give not room for apprehensions of the sort. It is impossible the Pemberton's should discover me; and, if Julia only suspects that Sedley is Osmond, her heart will not allow her to shun him. Besides the opportunities I have of speaking to her are so very few, that there is no danger of her coming to the truth. Two, and but two, delicious nights since my arrival have I spent in presence of the angel—each time I was in masquerade—I wore a habit to Portman-square that put it beyond the power of mortal to suspect who I was. For, the ball given by Lady Louisa, I provided one that rendered my appearance something gayer than a Hermit's: Montague saw it, and rallied me egregiously on my vanity, which he said would indubitably subject me to detestation. Lord Beaumont called at the moment, and I submitted the point to his decision: he gave it against me, and I was doomed to become a magician.

Unfortunately, Lady Julia took me for Suffolk—it was in vain to prevail on her to give up that opinion; and, to prevent my being avoided by her, I was obliged to assume the dress Sir Charles had objected to.

When Montague introduced me to her under my fictitious appellation, she was embarrassed what to think; declared my resemblance to—myself was strange! I at first enjoyed her perplexity. She unmasked for the benefit of freer respiration—the colour had fled her cheeks—her bosom heaved—and she seemed near fainting. I grew uneasy, and more than once regretted the surprise I had occasioned her. However, she was persuaded out of her reason, and regarded me as the friend of her lover.

Several addressed me by the title I have thrown aside. I was soon sensible that I ran a great hazard of being discovered; and forced to be very much on my guard—nay, I was discovered by one person! Lady Maria Hatley declared positively that I was Lord Osmond. I followed her, and by twenty artifices sought to remove the conjecture.

'Come,'

‘Come,’ said she, ‘let me see your face, and that will decide at once.’

You may be sure I evaded such an examination.

‘Well!’ she exclaimed, ‘you will not, I presume, refuse your hand to a Lady—give me leave to look on it—nay, it is natural to present the one next to me—your left hand I want.’

I offered it to her.

‘Indeed, my Lord, you are so diffident of me (knowing who I am), that you deserve no mercy. Do you yet deny that this is Lord Osmond’s hand?’

‘Most certainly I do.’

‘Your subterfuge is, that it is Julia Herbert’s.’

‘Whilst you keep your features concealed from me, I must wish that she would consider it in that light. There is temptation enough about her to make me willingly become Osmond’s rival!—But, as report says she is very cruel, prithee destroy the effect of her charms by withdrawing that unkind mask, and fix me yours at once. Much have I heard of Lady Maria Harley’s beauty, and’—

‘The fraudulency of that speech will not answer—Ha!—this ring, my Lord—the hair is the exact colour of Lady Julia’s I think—and the cyphers which these jewels compose are J. H.—What taste the little ornament displays!—It is very handsome indeed—done in Paris I suppose. Pray who is your Lordship’s jeweller there?’

I strove to persuade her that she had mistaken the initials; and hoped to make her silent, by hinting, that the Marquis must be a happy man, to engage so much of her attention. It was all to no purpose. ‘I declare,’ cried she, ‘if you will let me see your face, you shall find me serviceable in assisting to carry on the deception to others:—if not, I will tell Lady Julia who you really are, which I know she is anxious to learn, by a question I overheard her ask Sir Charles. It is for some weighty reason I find that you impose upon her—dread then the mischief I have it in my power to occasion!’

I led her aside, and unmasked.

‘Now,’ exclaimed I, catching her in my arms, ‘I must be rewarded, for gratifying as insatiable curiosity as ever female possessed!’

I imagined her Ladyship did not mean I should uncover my face without obliging her to do the same. She disengaged herself from me——

‘No infidelity to your Julia, my Lord!—You can have no pleasure in saluting any Lady but her. I am the last in the world who would monopolize the slightest of those endearments she alone is entitled to from you. I esteem her excellence; I admire her beauty; and wish you both happy. Receive my thanks for this proof of confidence, which, depend, is not ill bestowed.’

We returned to the company, and I rejoined the beloved of my soul——I am interrupted——

* * * * *

How will you exult at what I have just been told!—Between the hours of one and two this morning, Lady Henrietta Marchmont left her father’s house, with a smart young Cornet, whose fame is rendered something popular for dealing largely in scandal. Need I add this appellation? Take it then——Jack Ainsley. Budenall, an hour ago, looked in upon me, and gave the following intelligence:

‘Some evenings since, Frederick Montague and I were at the Cocoa-Tree, where Jack soon joined us. His heart laboured with an important discovery. We appeared totally unmindful of his hints, significant shrugs, and meaning looks——till at last he was provoked to tell us, without being interrogated, that he received the utmost encouragement from Lady Henrietta to become her lover. We both stared; and he, with an air of exultation, vowed, it was a pity she happened to be so damn’d ugly, else he might be prevailed on to take her as a companion to Scotland; and should be glad, by such a stroke, to break the chain of slavish dependence which Suffolk bound him so tight-ly

ly in. 'Unfortunately I owe him six thousand pounds,' added he, 'and must submit to his caprices.'

'Frederick declared, if her Ladyship gave him such a preference, he would make no objections to her person, as he should deem it madness for one of his narrow fortune to let slip so glorious an opportunity of ensuring happiness to himself.'

'You are right, Frederick,' exclaimed I; 'and was fate so propitious to you, you would not have much time to spare—a few days over, and she will be Duchess of Westmorland. I really compassionate the amiable Henrietta. It is incredible what romantic nonsense fills the heads of our young men. To me she does not appear so plain; she is well enough, I am sure, for a wife. Could I hope to succeed, I would most gladly rival his Grace.'

'Your Lordship might do that without much trouble,' cried he, 'not but to rival Mr. Ainsley, would be a difficult task indeed.'

'Jack smiled, bowed, and swallowed the bait greedily.'

'One circumstance,' replied he, 'deters me. My notions are too refined! Should the Duke marry Lady Henrietta, great part of her fortune at his death will devolve to his son—at least I suppose so—I would not be an enemy to Lord Osmond's interest.'

'We could hardly refrain from laughing at so absurd an answer, which was meant to inspire us with a high opinion of his generosity. We obviated his delicate scruples, and he took leave of us to attend an appointment he had with her Ladyship.'

'Harkye, Ainsley,' cried Frederick, as he was retreating, 'if you do not carry her off, I shall suspect the veracity of what you told us.'

'He answered with a thousand oaths that it was a fact.'

'I am incredulity itself,' returned Montague; 'prove it in the manner I have mentioned, and when I pay my compliments of congratulation to Lady Henrietta Ainsley, I will demand your pardon for now doubting your attestation.'

‘ Last night he informed Frederick, that the matter was settled: she was to be ready at a fixed moment to go off with him, accompanied by a maid who indisputably was agent in the whole scheme. Montague and I were solicitous for the event, and kept ourselves concealed near the spot where the carriage waited. In half an hour after we had taken our stand, we had the satisfaction of seeing Lady Henrietta, her attendant, and Jack, step into the chaise, and drive off at a furious rate.

‘ This morning about eleven o’clock I called in Grosvenor-Square. The house was in great confusion—Lord Davenport had just sent to inform the Duke of his daughter’s elopement, and the servant who carried the *fatal* intelligence, had given the alarm to his Grace’s domestics. On seeing a chaise drive to the door whilst I waited for admission, I asked the porter if my Lord Duke intended leaving London? The fellow answered in the affirmative, adding, he *supposed his Grace was going after Lady Henrietta Marchmont, who had run away from her friends*. I affected great astonishment, and enquired who went with her, and which way she was gone? The man very communicatively replied, Only her woman; that some of the maids heard Lady Henrietta’s Abigail say yesterday morning, in a jesting manner, that she hoped to become a great traveller, and see Scotland soon; from whence it was conjectured that her Lady and self had taken that road.

‘ On entering the Duke’s apartment, I perceived that he was much discomposed: however, he said not a syllable of the affair to me, but in a few minutes apologized for being obliged to send me away, pleading in excuse sudden business with Lord Davenport.

‘ Or with his daughter rather, my Lord!’ cried I laughing, and made my bow. From Grosvenor-Square I came hither, to receive your thanks for the part I had in spiriting Ainsley to do you such an essential service.’

Sir Charles and Frederick joined us—we laughed at the stratagem, and unanimously hoped that Jack would
make

make sure of his mistress before my father crosses the Tweed. It would be horribly disagreeable to her to return with her old, instead of her young lover. I wonder what Suffolk will think of this *coup d'éclat* of Jack's. I with the low pride that can delight in tyrannizing over a dependent, may meet with incessant mortifications!

Fail not to kiss my worthy Lady Caroline's hand as my representative—tell Lady Westbrook I presume to love her tenderly. Adieu, my dear Sir James! I can never lose sight of the favours I owe you, and shall ever be,

Your most grateful,

And affectionate friend,

OSMOND.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Honoured Sir,

I Write, by my Lord Duke's orders, to inform you, that, as we were between Eaton and Buckden, the darkness of the night hindering us from observing that the linch pin of one of the hind wheels of his Grace's chaise had dropped out, and, the postillions turning shortly, the wheel flew off, and the carriage upset. Unfortunately, my Lord Duke's right leg was broken—he remained so long in torture before we could procure a vehicle to convey him with any degree of ease to Buckden, (where we thought he would be better accommodated than at Eaton,) that by the time he reached it, he was speechless; however, with the assistance of proper remedies, we recovered him. A surgeon from Huntingdon attempted to set the bone—whether he has succeeded I know not—the leg is dreadfully swelled, and my Lord complains of agonizing pain. His Grace was very impatient at being kept at an inn,

and insisted on our removing him this morning to his seat, which is a mile within Peterborough. He would not listen to remonstrance, and we were forced to obey. A litter was got, on which we laid him, and with all imaginable caution brought him home; but we were hardly arrived, when he perceived symptoms of the gout flying about his stomach—he has a high fever, and is, upon the whole, in a most alarming situation.

I dispatched an express from Buckden to Mr. A——, desiring his attendance as soon as possible—the one I now send with this to your honour, carries a letter to the same purport to Doctor W——.

My Lord conjures you, by every thing you hold dear, to pardon past animosities, and allow him to see you—he has much to say, and transact, and fears he has but little time for either. He will be much obliged to you to call on his lawyer, Mr. ———, and beg of him to accompany you to Belfont. I must mention, that Lord Davenport, who was in the chaise with his Grace, received no injury from the accident, and, after seeing my Lord Duke put to bed, proceeded with great haste on his journey to Scotland. We heard on the road that Lady Henrietta was attended by a young officer; which intelligence added much to the two noblemen's consternation, and accelerated their speed to overtake them.

Where is my young Lord, Sir Charles? In what strange land is he concealed at such a juncture? The Duke seems afraid to repeat his name—yet I think he is apprehensive of dying without making him atonement. For God's sake, Sir, lose not a moment! Lord Osmond's interest is at stake.

I will trouble you no longer, but beg leave to subscribe myself, with great respect,

Honoured Sir,

Your most dutiful,

And obedient humble servant,

JOHN FREEBOURNE.

T.

To Lord Osmond.

HASTEN to your father, my dear friend, who is impatient to be reconciled to you—to bury in one cordial embrace all injuries, and to hear from your lips that he is forgiven. If ever man was repentant, the Duke is—he clasps his hands in an agony of despair; he weeps, and execrates his late criminal conduct—he says you must incessantly pour curses on his guilty head, and that eternity has prepared tortures to complete the vengeance you demand on him. He views the calamity he has met with, as a chastisement from heaven for the unjust part he was acting towards you; and declares the pains he feels are nothing to those he shall encounter after death. Just now he called me to his side.

‘What would I not give Sir Charles,’ cried he, ‘to see my son—to expire in his arms!—But I am unworthy of that comfort—Death will have finished my miserable course, ere the amiable boy can be informed of my condition.’

I told him you were in London, and would immediately obey his summons.

‘In London do you say—is he so near?—’
And now my coward heart fails at the thought of beholding him——Oh, Sir Charles! when I must be quickly hurried hence to account for the murder of a wife, how can I bear to meet the gentle reproaches of that wife, in the face of her Harry?—His eyes, so like my ill-fated Laura’s, will dart ten thousand poniards to my soul—they will upbraid me with the cruelty she experienced from me—they will upbraid me with stretching my inhumanity towards her beyond the grave, in alienating my affections from her son—in abandoning him to the calamities of the world—nay, in seeking to deprive him of the little I had no right to keep from him—Plunging into futurity, all my crimes stand confessed to my sight:—my Laura’s sufferings—the unnatural part I have acted in respect of my child—my only child, lie heavy on my conscience.

—and the remembrance of my brutal conversation, Sir Charles, the last time I saw you, fills up the measure of my despair—I can have no consolation—Let hell gape at once and swallow me—I cannot—I will not see Osmond—he certainly disclaims me!

I endeavoured to compose him—I asked if he had ever found you of a vindictive turn? He interrupted me—

‘I have always found him generous and noble; but he has now such repeated injuries to look back on, that I dare not hope for his pardon. You best know his disposition—with shame I own, that I was ever uneasy in his presence, and kept him sundered from me as much as possible. His countenance so strongly represents his fainted mother’s, that it continually reminded me of my base treatment of her.’

I offered many arguments to obviate his objection, and begged him to allow me to send for you. Freebourn, who was by, fell on his knees—

‘For the love of God, my Lord,’ exclaimed he with energy, ‘do not deny yourself the happiness of seeing the Marquis! If his features express the least reproach—turn me that minute from your service, loaden with every indignity that can be thought of. Your Grace must be indeed a stranger to him, if you suspect his tenderness!’

‘I wish more than I can mention to see my son, but I am afraid of him. Sir Charles and you say I have no reason, from his benevolence—I will then throw aside my apprehensions, and give myself up to the pleasure of expecting him. Send directly, Sir Charles; and tell him, as he hopes to see me alive, to make haste to Belfont—I long to clasp him in my arms—to let loose my sorrow, my repentance on his bosom.’

You may judge, my dearest Osmond, with what joy I retired to obey him.—The Duke is dangerously ill; the gout has attacked his stomach, and his leg was so vilely mismanaged, as not to have been set till A—did it, which from the violent swelling was a most difficult task to effect, and an operation painful enough,

enough, I think, to have killed him in his present situation.

I hope that you make yourself no further reproaches—How were you accessory to the misfortune? You knew nothing of the matter, till after the Duke left town; and if Budenall and Frederick sought to promote your interest, can you be blamed whilst you were ignorant of the measures they adopted for that purpose? I will be hanged, if either of them have a scruple on the occasion. They will tell you, your father had no business to make himself ridiculous, by pursuing a young girl who evinced such an aversion to him—that they meant to do him a service, and prevent his head from resembling Actæon's—and a hundred other reasons that I think not bad.—Let things go as they will, you are rid of a mother-in-law for the present. Lord Davenport arrived too late in Scotland to hinder the validity of his daughter's marriage—He returned directly, passed half an hour at Belfont, in which time he deplored his fate most ruefully. He merits the trick she played him for constraining her to act so oppositely to her inclinations. He has just driven from the gate, and you may probably meet him, as he does not return with so much expedition as he came down.

I must write two lines to my Louisa, and the express waits. I am, my dear Osmond,

Truly yours,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

To Lady WESTBROOK.

Wednesday, Two o'Clock.

WHEN you have read the two enclosed letters *, which, by Lord Osmond's desire, and Sir Charles Montague's, I send for your, Lady Caroline's, and Sir James's perusal, you will not be surpris'd, dear Emily,

* The two preceding letters.

Emily, at hearing that the Marquis has just set out for Peterborough. On receiving his friend's summons, he ordered his chaise.—He was much afflicted at the Duke's situation. When he bade me adieu,

'I never knew till within these three days, Lady Louisa,' cried he, 'how dear he is to me — My unhappy father! — I regret my past impatience towards you most sensibly.'

Ah, what has not the Duke lost, by depriving himself of the society of this unparagon'd young man!

Lady Mortimer, and Julia, have promised to occupy places in my box this evening at Drury-Lane. Almeria is confined by a slight indisposition, and Lady Pemberton stays at home with her. I am to call on our sweet friend, and carry her to the play-house.

As soon as I hear from Belfont, I will write again. In the mean while, believe me, dear Lady Westbrook,

Much yours,,

LOUISA MONTAGUE.

To Lady WESTBROOK.

A quarter after twelve

SLEEP is banished from my eyes, and I must busy myself in making you a partaker of my happiness.—I went early to Portman-Square; and, desirous of enquiring after Almeria, left my carriage, and was shewn into the eating-room, where I found only Lady Pemberton and her two daughters. I perceived they were acquainted with the accident which had befallen the Duke, and with his dangerous situation, but ignorant of Sir Charles's having been sent for. I mentioned nothing of it even to Julia. Sir Charles had given me no directions how to act, and I thought it would make no difference, if she remained in the dark a few hours — besides to say a truth, I was afraid to trust myself on
the

the subject, lest by some unguarded word I might let drop a hint that the Marquis was in England; and I dreaded nothing so much, well knowing what commotion I should raise in her breast, and how severely I should be chid for my duplicity with her.

We were stepping into the coach, when Lord Pemberton and Mr. Montague walked to the door.

‘Where is Sir Charles, Lady Louisa?’ cried my Lord.

‘He left town a few days ago,’ replied I.

‘That is cursedly unlucky!’

‘Do you want him, my Lord?’

‘I was in hopes he would have gone down to Peterborough, and prevailed on Westmorland to be reconciled to his son—Osmond is unfortunate—I fear the Duke will keep his word.’

‘No doubt of it!—why should he not exemplify as much firmness in his resolutions as you do? Inflexibility is one of your virtues, Lord Pemberton—here is an instance of the same shining quality in another; pray admire it!—If pity is foreign to the Duke’s nature, Sir Charles’s rhetoric would be lost on him.’

He looked abashed, but tried to turn my words into ridicule. The gentlemen entered the house, and we proceeded to the theatre. During our drive, Julia condemned herself incessantly for not admitting of Lord Osmond’s return, when he supplicated that favour—

‘His presence at such a season might be very necessary,’ cried she;—‘but with the best intentions in the world, I am always wrong!’

I said, I was convinced the Duke would do nothing contrary to the interest of Lord Osmond. She wept and replied, it would have been happy for him, had they never met.

Lady Mortimer and Lady Seymour were in the box, when we entered it. Lord Seymour and Mr. Bishop came to us soon after, and placed themselves on each side of me. As I sat immediately behind Lady Mortimer, I had an opportunity of telling her, in a short whisper,

whisper, that Osmond was gone down to Belfont, at his father's request.

'Thank God!' exclaimed she: 'I suppose, then, Sir Charles will be back immediately—this night perhaps—I long to hear'—

I observed that Julia looked at us with a penetrating eye—I drew off, and prevented further discourse on the subject. Lady Mortimer took the hint—I heard her say, in a low voice to Julia,

'What! a doleful countenance still?—You perceive some of my wishes concerning the Duke have at length *happily* taken effect——may you not naturally conclude that the others I have formed will be crowned with equal success?'

At the end of the third act the door opened—judge of my surprize at seeing Sir Charles Montague step into the box—I am sure, if those around took notice of my face, they must have supposed that he detected me in something not right. I could not help saying, 'Good God! what is the matter?' He stole his finger to his mouth. I understood the sign, and was silent. Lady Mortimer, no doubt, was anxious to speak with him; but, lest she should alarm her sister, assumed an air of composure, and endeavoured to carry her attention to the opposite boxes, by some remarks she made. Sir Charles caught an instant without being overheard, to tell me not to be uneasy——that he had delightful news for me—and enquired if my friend knew of his journey to Belfont? I replied in the negative. Two minutes after, Julia said, the pleasure of seeing him was unexpected—that I had informed her he was absent from London.

'I am but just returned to it,' answered he.—'This is sad weather for the country, my Lord,' addressing himself to Seymour: 'even Surry looks miserably as you travel through it!'

Sir Charles took his seat behind me, and on Lord Seymour's leaving the box (to join some Ladies with whom he remained till the play was nearly over), leaned his head pretty close to my ear, and spoke as follows:

'Some

‘Some hours after I had sent away the express to Osmond, I perceived that the Duke became very wretched. He at one time avowed great apprehension of his son’s refusing to approach him—he bewailed the occasion he had given him for doing so, and worked himself into an agony that I really thought would terminate his existence. From this notion, he fell into another that disturbed him equally. He declared Osmond was too humane to reject the summons of a dying parent, however vile that parent’s conduct had been.—

‘Yes he will come, Sir Charles,’ cried he, ‘but in what manner shall I look up to him?—The innumerable wrongs I have heaped upon him will rush through my brain—they will oppress my heart, and, before I can pronounce a petition for pardon—I shall be no more.——Oh, must not Osmond think that I am only frightened at the horrors of death—that, were life lent me a little longer, I should again relapse?—Montague, you know not all the cruelty I have practised towards him—you know not what cause he has to despise me—nor how justly I despair of conciliating his affection in my last moments!’

‘I strove to appease his mind. All I urged had no effect—his conflicts were insupportable.’

‘Could I compensate in any shape, Sir Charles, for what is past, I would convince him how sincere is my repentance—then should I without torture behold my son—but it is not in my power, and I must submit to the most dreadful fate a man can brook—I must see him, whom I have injured, trying through mere charity to administer consolation to me—I must receive that favour at his hands, and be debarred the satisfaction of repaying his goodness.—Can leaving him my estates demonstrate any tenderness—Will not Osmond say, ‘Unworthy Westmorland!—the fortune you could make no further use of—rather than bestow it on some wretched foundling, you bequeathed to your son’—he will marry the angel Julia, and carry to his bridal bed this reflection—from my unnatural father’s dissolution springs my happiness!—Oh, Osmond!

that

that you could read what passes this moment in that father's heart !'

'He turned away his head, and I retired from the bed—In about a couple of hours he called me to him, 'Montague, the Almighty, in compassion, has inspired me with a thought that affords comfort—Perhaps, if I make concessions to the Pemberton's—if I humbly entreat them to bestow Lady Julia on my Henry, they will forget the feuds which have subsisted between us, and assent to my request !' 'Indeed, my Lord,' cried I, 'I think it very probable—try at least. If your Grace succeeds, you will more than recompense the Marquis for all he has endured. Had he passed years of slavery—had he gone through the severest hardships this life is subject to, and at length obtained such a creature as Julia Herbert, he would possess a treasure equivalent to his sufferings.'

'I am too sensible, Montague,' replied he, 'of the insult I gave her in permitting the generous, disinterested letter she sent me, to go unnoticed—Oh, that her family may suffer me to atone for it !'

'I was astonished, and begged of him to explain himself—He desired Freebourne to bring him his pocket-book—The Duke opened it, and put a letter (which I have about me, and will shew you at a more convenient time) into my hands. The characters were Julia's. I read it with a good deal of surprize, and said, I wished to be allowed to keep it a few days for your perusal—he answered I was at liberty to do so.

'Is not such a girl,' demanded his Grace, 'who can sacrifice her passion for the welfare of the man she loves, deserving of happiness?—What a brute have I been !—Montague, I might yet die in peace, could I see her the wife of Osmond—to have my children in my arms—instead of reproaches, to receive their thanks—Great God ! what a change should I experience from my present feelings !—Sweet Julia !—in form and mind you are unparalleled in truth—and only Osmond is entitled to call you his !'

'He ordered implements for writing to be brought to him, and with great difficulty he penned a letter
to

to Lady Dowager Pemberton. When he had finished,

‘Now, Sir Charles,’ cried he, ‘give me an instance of your friendship—set off directly for London—if you meet Osmond, insist on his returning with you—tell him I command him not to come to Belfont, till I can bear his presence with some degree of composure—assure him that my whole heart is his—but that, unless he brings with him an angel of peace, who shall be my intercessor, his approach must be dreadful to me—Tender this letter to Lady Pemberton—exert all your influence with her to read it, and to grant me the blessing I solicit—assail her humanity, my friend, with supplications—conjure her to reflect how necessary to her daughter’s felicity it is, that she should yield to your persuasion—Convince Lord Pemberton that I would write to entreat his concurrence also—but that I am exhausted from the effort I have made in addressing Lady Pemberton—Desire Harry to plead his own cause—if they object to having the nuptial ceremony performed without previously determining about settlements, and executing marriage-deeds; let Osmond leave with them a *carte blanche*, to be filled up as Lord Pemberton pleases—They may think it right to have my signature as well as my son’s at the bottom, supposing I might recover—that point shall produce no delay.

‘Again the Duke took up a pen, and wrote his name on a sheet of paper—he presented it to me—

‘Give this to Harry—it may help to assure him that my repentance is sincere. On you, my kind, compassionate friend, I depend for comfort. Montague, suffer me to embrace my son and daughter in eight and forty hours—I can allow you no more time—and yet how can I expect it!—The hour is unreasonable for travelling—Freebourn, what o’clock is it?’

‘He answered, Something after two.

‘Ah!’ cried the Duke, ‘I have already interfered greatly with your repose—retire to rest, Sir Charles, for

for the present, and go on your charitable errand to gratify a dying old man at eight or nine o'clock. — I will, as fervently as I can, beseech Heaven to prolong my existence till you return.'

'I told him I did not require rest, and would depart immediately, if I could get post-horses from the town.'

'Freebourne said there would be much time lost before it could be done—that he would recommend to me to go to bed, promising that my chaise should be ready by seven o'clock.

'I went into Doctor W—'s apartment, and, after some apologies for disturbing him, begged he would inform me whether he thought the Duke could live three days?

'He assured me, that, though he was so ill as to leave him in doubt of his recovery, he saw no immediate danger of death; but rather supposed, from the natural strength of his constitution, that his complaints would find subject to work upon for many days. 'Was his mind less agitated, Sir Charles,' cried he, 'I should have hopes of him; but, torn as he is by tumultuous affections, all remedies lose their power, and his disorder is irritated.'

'Freebourne was faithful to his word: at the appointed hour my chaise was ready. Before I left Belfont I entered the Duke's chamber; Dr. W. had just quitted it. His Grace reached out his hand to me. 'I find myself refreshed, dear Montague,' said he, 'I have had some sleep. W. thinks my fever less violent; and I presume to trust that I shall see my children to-morrow night—Dear Sir Charles, let me not be disappointed. Again I repeat, all my reliance is on your friendship.'

'I told him I would do all that man could to accomplish his desire; and entreated he would keep his spirits composed, and rest satisfied in the idea of enjoying for many years the society of Osmond and his Julia. I bade him adieu, stepped into the carriage, and began my journey.

'I met

‘I met Osmond near Hatfield. You may suppose he paid implicit obedience to his father’s commands, and returned to town with me on the commission we were sent, without much reluctance. We drove to Cumberland street, and changed our apparel—The servants told us you were just gone to the play—Osmond and I agreed, that it would be best he should remain at our house, till I discovered what success our enterprize would have. He was apprehensive only of giving Julia occasion to regret his unexpected appearance, should her friends continue inexorable; as it would serve to renew all her sufferings, and might reduce her to the situation she was in at Windsor. Hence you will know, that we were ignorant of her being of your party.

‘I luckily found Lord Pemberton in Portman-square, and no stranger present (I cannot call Frederick Montague one). I delivered my embassy, and was beyond my hopes most graciously received. I could scarcely credit my senses, when I heard Pemberton exclaim,

‘By Heaven I am rejoiced!—Julia shall yet be happy!’ He solicited his mother in my friend’s behalf with an energy that surpassed mine. Lady Pemberton said, as the Duke was so suppliant—Julia so much attached to the Marquis—and he really so every way deserving of her, she could offer no further objection to their union. Pemberton asked where Lord Osmond was?

‘At my house,’ said I, ‘waiting in all the torture of suspense.’

‘Let us hasten to him,’ cried he;—‘but I must give orders, Madam, that your Ladyship should be denied to every one who comes—Suffolk—the unfortunate Suffolk, will probably be at your door this evening.

‘Pray inform me, Sir Charles,’ said Lady Pemberton, ‘who was the mask that attended my daughter so closely on the night of your ball?’

‘Lord Osmond, Madam,’ replied I: ‘Lady Julia believed him a stranger to her.’

‘Perhaps

‘Perhaps she was not so credulous as you imagined!’ exclaimed her Ladyship laughing: ‘you and I, my friend, have a long account to settle when we are more at leisure—but hasten, Pemberton to the Marquis, and conduct him hither.’

‘A few minutes carried us to Cumberland-street—We found Osmond with Lord Beaumont, who had called to enquire whether you had received any tidings from me, and was endeavouring to inspire his companion with confidence; for our friend had acquainted him with the manner in which he was circumstanced.

‘I congratulate you,’ cried my Lord, on our entrance: ‘I foresee good news—here is the brother of your Julia!’

‘Pemberton flew to Osmond, and embraced him—he begged he would pardon his late behaviour, and grant him his friendship as frankly as he with pleasure gave Julia to his arms. Never did I behold any one more amazed than the Marquis—he seemed torpid for some seconds—at last, recovering himself, he expressed many acknowledgments to Lord Pemberton for such a proof of esteem, and assured him he should ever find him zealous to promote Lady Julia’s happiness, and deserving of his Lordship’s regard. He asked if he might not be permitted to attend Lady Julia?’

‘You must check your impatience a little,’ replied Pemberton: ‘she is gone to the play with Lady Louisa Montague; but my mother is anxious to embrace your Lordship.’

‘My uncle accompanied us back to Portman-square—Lady Pemberton met Osmond with the tenderness due to one who is soon to become her son.—She entreated him to impute her past refusal of his alliance to the ridiculous pique that subsisted between the Duke and her family, which from his Grace’s example she blushed to reflect on. The Marquis poured forth an effusion of gratitude for her kindness, that affected her not a little.

‘You have all acted,’ cried I, ‘much to the Duke’s satisfaction—now comes my part. His Grace hopes

to behold Osmond and his fair bride to-morrow night—his last words to me were, ‘Montague, let me not be disappointed.’ Lady Pemberton—my Lord—do you not wish that he should see his son in his dying moments? And yet he will deny himself that comfort, unless he sees his daughter at the same time. Is it necessary, that to wait the tedious custom of making new cloaths, new furniture, bespeaking jewels, equipages, and a catalogue of nonsensical vanities, a man’s last hour should be rendered miserable?

‘By no means, they said—they would do whatever lay in their power to gratify the Duke.’

‘Osmond thanked them gracefully; and, presenting the paper his father and himself had signed to Pemberton, told him, that, as drawing marriage-articles would require more time than could be given on so pressing an occasion, he must beg the favour of his Lordship to have that paper filled in a manner consonant to Lady Julia’s interest, and only implored he would keep in remembrance that his father possessed a very large fortune. When he returned to London, he meant, in the formal method, to have writings executed which should ratify the terms his name stood to.’

‘Lord Pemberton asked his mother to allow him to transact that business according to his inclination?’

‘Certainly!’ she answered.

‘Pardon me, my Lord,’ cried he, ‘for what I do—but thus I dispose of the paper’—and he threw it into the fire. ‘There is nothing that might not be left to the honour of a man, who would willingly have given up such a fortune as the Duke’s to have gained Julia—No more on this head—make in your own time what settlement you please!’

‘Your generosity, dear Pemberton,’ exclaimed Osmond, ‘is very noble: and I shall certainly demonstrate my affection for Lady Julia in a way that her friends must approve—Will your Ladyship then permit me to hope (with her consent) that I shall introduce her to my father as his daughter to-morrow night?’

‘Most

‘Most readily, my Lord!’ answered Lady Pemberton—He kissed her hand—

‘Return, dear Madam, the same reply to another supplication, and my happiness will surpass a mortal’s—Prevail on Julia to let the ceremony be performed this evening—a licence can be procured, and a Clergyman in waiting, against she returns.’

‘Oh, thou unconscionable creature!’ exclaimed Lady Pemberton.

‘Your Ladyship must perceive the necessity of my request—we can set out early to-morrow for Belfont; otherwise our journey will be greatly delayed—Lord Pemberton, is the Bishop of W——— in town? I am sure he will gladly attend on so joyful an occasion—Will you accompany me to him?’

‘With all my heart,’ replied Pemberton: ‘I saw him this very day, and hope we shall find him at home.’ Osmond snatched up his hat, and was eager to be gone: but Lady Pemberton interfered, and declared that nine o’clock to-morrow morning would be time enough for the performance of the ceremony—they might set out immediately afterwards, and reach Belfont with great ease at night, travelling post, and making no delay on the road.

‘Osmond asked, if he might presume to beg of her Ladyship and Lady Almeria to go down with them? She regretted that it was not in their power, alleging that Almeria was too much indisposed to leave home, and she could not quit her. He expressed infinite concern at being deprived of such a pleasure, and at the occasion of it. He turned to Pemberton, and made him the like entreaty: he answered, he would have the honour to attend him. ‘My good Lord Beaumont,’ cried the Marquis, ‘you have often sought to alarm me, by owning yourself my rival—yet I am bold enough to wish that your Lordship’s regard for Lady Julia may never decrease—and that I may find her power sufficient to induce you to accompany us to Peterborough.’

‘You are a fine fellow truly!’ replied Lord Beaumont; ‘and so you desire that I should die with envy!’—

vy!—No, no, Osmond, I must be excused—take her from me at once, or you may have cause to dread the effects of so *ardent*, so *youthful* a passion as mine.’

‘On Osmond’s urging his petition, he told him seriously, he could not be so happy, as he was obliged on Friday to go down to Bagshot for a week.

‘My dearest Frederick,’ said the Marquis, taking his hand, ‘you were my companion in affliction—never shall I forget the trouble I gave you—nor your humanity—let me hope that you will also be a witness of my joy; and make one in our party to-morrow.’

‘I will see you married, my Lord,’ cried Frederick; ‘that gratification I must have—but you know how I am circumstanced, and that it is impossible for me to leave town at present.’

‘Pemberton and Osmond proposed departing in quest of the Bishop, and a licence.’

‘We shall find you here on our return, Montague?’ cried Pemberton.

‘Not unless you stay a great while,’ said I.

‘We shall take a hackney-coach,’ answered he, ‘and make the fellow drive as if he was escaping from the devil. I would not have Julia come in our absence for a thousand pounds. Should she do so, I implore that no person may inform her of what has happened. She thinks I have behaved cruelly in this affair—let me embrace the opportunity to re-instate myself in her affections, by surprizing her with the felicity that awaits her——But where are you going, Sir Charles?’ ‘To join the Ladies at the play,’ replied I. ‘There it is!—you will destroy my scheme.’

‘Not I—I shall tell her nothing—allow me however to acquaint my wife’——

‘Aye, and she will acquaint Julia.’

‘You are mistaken—she can keep a secret.’

‘Swear, then, upon your honour, that Julia shall not through your means arrive at the least knowledge of Osmond’s being in London, or of our having consented to their marriage.’

‘I did

‘I did as he desired; and we sallied forth on our different errands, leaving Lady Pemberton, Almeria, Lord Beaumont, and Frederick, sitting down to whist.’

The fourth act was nearly over when Sir Charles finished—At the conclusion of it, Lady Mortimer leaned back, and with a sarcastic countenance asked him what he thought of the performance he had been spectator to? He laughed—‘I hope the *dénouement* will be happy, Sir Charles?’ cried she. ‘I cherish that hope, my Lady,’ he answered: ‘I called in Portman-square an hour ago, and my Lady Pemberton desired I would beg the favour of your Ladyship to return with Lady Julia and my wife to supper there.’

‘I cannot, indeed!’ said she—‘my Lord expects three gentlemen to spend the evening with him, and he will be disappointed, if I do not assist to entertain them—I promised not to wait the farce.’

The play was no sooner ended, than one of her servants announced at the box door, that her chair was ready. Mr. Bishop presented his hand, and led her out. As she passed us, I overheard Sir Charles tell her, not to retire early, for he would visit her and Lord Mortimer before he rested.—I was very impatient to be gone; and felt much satisfaction when Lady Seymour declared, that there was such confusion in getting away from Drury-Lane on a full night, that she never staid till the house broke up. Lord Seymour went out to see for their carriage—mine had been ordered very soon, and I asked Julia if she was extremely solicitous to see the *Wedding-Ring*?—else we would retire then. She assured me, that she was willing to attend me whenever I pleased.

As we were returning, Julia enquired of Sir Charles, whether he had heard any account of the Duke?

‘Only that he is dangerously ill,’ cried he: ‘his situation must be deplorable I think!’

He waved the subject—which I dare say surprized, and mortified her. When the coach stopped in Portman-square, how was I agitated!—The door opened, and Lord Pemberton flew to hand us out.

‘Have

‘Have you succeeded, my Lord?’ demanded Sir Charles.

‘To my heart’s content!’ replied Pemberton: ‘I am not ten minutes arrived.’

‘Is any thing the matter brother?’ cried Julia.

‘No, my dear.’

As we entered the hall, she exclaimed,

‘I am convinced that some strange affair has happened!—Why did you run out of the house so precipitately to meet us?—Perhaps my mother—or Almeria!’—‘Be at rest, they are both well—I was eager to inform you that—Mournies has eloped with a countryman of hers.—Let us go up stairs; Lady Pemberton will give you the whole story.’

‘Lord, brother, how absurd!’

‘You will be peevish, Julia,’ cried he, as we ascended, ‘no doubt, when you perceive who is impatiently waiting for you in the drawing-room.’

‘The Duke of Suffolk, I suppose!—but I shall preserve my temper by avoiding him.’

‘Upon my soul, you shall not!—call me tyrannical—unfeeling—what you please—I have been used to those epithets from you—and will hear them once more. After this night, I shall molest you no further.’ She was making to her apartment—but he led her back—

‘Do not be perverse, Julia—I swear by all that is sacred, I will conduct your lover to your dressing-room, if you fly thither!’

She blushed with anger, and told him, he was certainly very cruel!

‘Aye, aye, I knew it’—he threw open the drawing-room door—‘and now for the rest, *barbarous, tyrannical*!’—She listened not to him—her attention was engrossed by another object.—Emily, what pen can describe her appearance when she saw Osmond at her feet!—mine must fail in the attempt—Astonishment—joy—fear, were blended in her countenance, and, beautifully as I have seen her look, she was then more charming than ever. The emotions of her soul were

too violent—she fainted—and gave us great cause to think that the jest had been carried far enough to turn our delight into grief—it was so difficult a task to recover her, that at one time I really imagined her breath had flown for ever. Lady Pemberton was dreadfully alarmed—Lord Pemberton execrated his ridiculous folly—and Osmond seemed within one degree only of distraction—The rest of us were flying backwards and forwards to get volatiles, drops, &c. &c. &c. scarcely knowing what we ordered, or brought for her relief—Confusion never reigned more triumphantly than it did this evening in Portman-square for more than a quarter of an hour. At length we were restored to peace—she opened her eyes, and, on finding herself in the arms of her Henry, exclaimed,

‘My friends are implacable—your father has my promise—Emily writes that Sedley is no assumed name—Sedley then is a false friend!—trust him no more, my dearest Osmond!’

Sir Charles forced the Marquis to retire with him, that she might have time to calm her spirits, and be informed of their happiness—and that he might regain a share of composure, for he was exceedingly affected. In a few minutes she became tranquil, and Lord Pemberton cautiously acquainted her with the circumstances that had happened—she raised herself from the sofa on which she was reclined—she clasped her hands, and with an edifying fervour returned thanks to Heaven.

On Lord Osmond’s entrance, she stood up with ineffable grace to receive him—He pressed her to his bosom. ‘I have betrayed great weakness, my Lord,’ cried she; ‘but I have been indisposed—I am easily overcome’—He interrupted her, and begged she would not by apologies destroy the happiness he felt in thinking that her agitation arose from affection.

Lord Pemberton told her there was no delaying the ceremony that was to confirm her Osmond’s beyond the next morning. She looked shocked—‘Surely, not to-morrow, my Lord!’ exclaimed she;—‘you cannot mean it should be performed to-morrow!’

‘To-morrow

‘ To-morrow indeed, my Julia !’ cried the Marquis — ‘ For Heaven’s sake do not refuse ! Consider the condition my father is in—every moment how precious !—deny not the dying request of *my* father !’

‘ His unfortunate situation, my Lord, affects me sensibly ; but do not let us shed tears of sorrow on our marriage—A wedding and a funeral should never be paired !—Tell the Duke we cannot think of happiness whilst he is in misery—that reason must be grateful to him !’

‘ The present hours are propitious—if we do not profit of them, we may never again find such—Should my father live (and I sincerely hope he will), he may once more be cruel—You know he is capricious—and having a petition he so humbly, so ardently implores, rejected, must offend him—it will probably dispose him to revoke his present good intentions.’

She said she had no fears of the sort, and appealed to Lady Pemberton whether it would not be better to wait a month or two ?—Osmond shewed some impatience—he exclaimed, ‘ Good God, Lady Julia, a *month or two* !’ He seemed afraid of Lady Pemberton’s answer ; however, she soon relieved him.

‘ My dear,’ cried her Ladyship, ‘ you are yet to learn, that, unless you accompany your friend to Belmont, his father will not see him ; which is an indisputable argument for your compliance—But, were you exempt from this obligation, sure it would be the height of barbarity not to gratify a dying person who wishes to have the comfort of atoning for a fault !—I will mention another reason, that, no doubt, must carry sufficient weight with you—If your nuptials are postponed, the unhappy Suffolk, on finding that Lord Osmond is returned, will be outrageous—Much distress will he occasion you—We shall hear every day of some new quarrel, till at length that one of them has dropped—When you are Lady Osmond, he can have no further hopes, and will through necessity then be at rest.’

This had a better effect on her than any thing—She was silent—

‘Indeed, my sweet Julia,’ said Lord Beaumont, ‘you deviate a little from your own sensible character in making one objection—Why reluctant to oblige the man you love, and whose tried attachment to you demands every requital you can bestow?’

‘We will leave Osmond,’ exclaimed her brother, ‘to prevail on her to consent with pleasure—*consent* she positively must—He is in possession of the licence, and the Bishop of W. has promised to be here at nine o’clock to-morrow morning. Let us go down stairs where a collation is waiting. If they chuse supper, they will join us; but when I was a lover, I had scarcely any appetite.’

We repaired to the eating-room—dumb waiters were placed, and the servants dismissed. Lady Pemberton regretted her brother’s absence from London at this crisis. I blessed the circumstance, as a favour ordained by Providence, though I durst not say so. Her Ladyship also regretted, that she was unable to attend Julia to Peterborough. ‘To own the truth, I have always been taught to look on the Duke as so *terrible* a man,’ cried Almeria, ‘that, if I was well enough to accompany my sister, I believe I should imagine myself carried to the house of a great giant—and should expect to be devoured every instant—I can never—never be cordial to him!’

‘This is the misfortune of an early prejudice!’ cried Lady Pemberton. You must conquer it; or I shall appear culpable in my own eyes, for having given rise to it.—I am distressed about my poor Julia—to go down without a female companion.—

‘Louisa,’ said Almeria, ‘you are not afraid of the Duke; I beg you will pay him a visit with Julia!’

I answered that I would very readily; but Sir Charles declared he was apprehensive of my travelling so far with the expedition they would be obliged to use—to say nothing of the disagreeable scene that perhaps
awaited

awaited them at Belfont. 'The Duke's death,' added Sir Charles, 'might afford a spectacle I could wish Louisa to avoid in her present situation.'

'The same reason holds good in respect of my wife,' returned Lord Pemberton: 'there is no necessity that either of them should be exposed to danger—I am sure my sister would not desire it!'

'That I am convinced of,' replied Lady Pemberton. 'Perhaps Caroline will go!'

'What, leave her little William, Madam?—Oh no! if she does, she will prove her affection for Julia to be great indeed!'

In less than half an hour Lord Osmond came down with a much happier countenance than ever I saw him wear.

'Well, cried Pemberton, 'have you prevailed?'

'To-morrow makes me blest!' he exclaimed.

'And where is Julia?'

'Retired to her apartment—I have, with difficulty detained her even this short while from it.'

I left the table, and went up to her. I found her giving Mournies orders for their journey.

'And is it true, Ledy Louise,' cried she, 'dat we are going to de Duc de Westmorland's?'

'Aye,' said I; 'your Lady will be married to-morrow to Lord Osmond—to the man, Mournies, who has caused so much disturbance to this family—who was held in abhorrence yesterday by Lord and Lady Pemberton!'

'Saint Joseph!—wat strange news I hear—Pauvre my Lor Duc de Suffolk!—wat you get by your fighting, I wonder!'

'Why, I believe, you are disappointed that she is not to wed Suffolk, instead of Osmond!'

'Oh, mon Dieu, Madame, no!—Dere is good cause wy I no like de Duc'—She turned to Julia; 'Come, come, wat for?—you cry because you no marry my Lor Osmond—sure you don't cry *now* because you do marry him!—Well, I am ver glad—he is un brave cavalier, and ver pretty too!'

Julia could not help smiling—I would have engaged her in discourse (which is the delight of my heart) for some time, but Julia bade her dispatch the directions she had given her, and she went into the next room.

—My amiable friend and I had a great deal of conversation during the short time I staid with her. She did not fail to reproach me for imposing Lord Osmond on her as Mr. Sedley. I at first affected surprize at her accusation; but perceiving that Osmond had discovered the cheat, I could no longer deny the charge, and defended myself as well as I could. You did not escape some degree of censure for the equivocal answer you made to her letter. I took my leave, promising to be with her between eight and nine in the morning. It wanted but a few minutes of twelve when we wished Lady Pemberton a good night. Lord Osmond and Sir Charles set me down at home, and then drove to Dover-street. You will find by the date of my letter, that I took up my pen immediately to give you the above account, which has employed me two hours. They returned just now, and Sir Charles tells me, that, at the Marquis's first entreaty, the Mortimer's consented to accompany him and his fair mistress to Belfont. Their little boy is to be left with Lady Dowager Pemberton, during their absence from London.

* * * * *

I was in Portman-square before the appointed time this morning. I flew to Julia's apartment, and found her dressed in a most elegant *desthabillé*, calculated at once for her nuptials, and her journey. She really looked a celestial creature! She was writing.

'So soon ready, Julia!' cried I: 'you have had but little rest I fear.'

'Why, not much,' replied she: 'it is a disagreeable thing, Louisa, to be so hurried on an awful occasion!'—'Right,' said I; 'but you would have been glad some months ago to think that you should give your hand to Lord Osmond, even in this hasty manner.'

She

She sighed.

‘Can it indeed be true, Julia, that human nature is so perverse as to contemn the value of a blessing when in our power, which we are miserable to obtain whilst we regard it as entirely out of our reach?—Are you become indifferent to my Lord since last night?’

‘What have I done that requires such an observation—such a question? Surely, it is natural that I should wish for more time! It gives you no room to suspect that I am insensible of my happiness. Believe me, Louisa, each moment that I am with the Marquis, affords encrease to my affection—but I have hardly recovered the shock I received on beholding him so unexpectedly. I look back on what passed as an illusion, and can scarcely think I am awake. I have been writing to Lady Westbrook—would to heaven I could see her, and my two other friends!—I received a note from my Lord as soon as I was up, to say, that Mortimer and Caroline have agreed to go down with us to Peterborough. What an instance of tenderness in Osmond to obtain me that satisfaction! What an instance of goodness in them, to leave their infant, of whom they are so doatingly fond, and consent at such short warning to a journey of the sort?—I wish, Louisa, you could with safety be of our party—but it is not to be thought of. It happens unluckily that my mother and Almeria cannot leave town. I would have all that I love go with me I believe; for I tremble at the idea of being thrown amongst strangers—This childish folly is ridiculous!—still—do you imagine, Louisa, I might never have cause to remember my brother’s prediction—Might not Westmorland, if he recovers, treat me in a manner different from what I have been accustomed to from the kindest relations a young creature was ever blessed with?’

‘Now,’ said I, ‘your doubts of Lord Osmond are evident! He will never suffer his Julia’—

She laid her hand over my mouth,——‘Hush!—I know he will not—I am sensible already of my weakness,

ness, and that he is deserving of a better partner—I blush for what I have uttered.—My mother told me that Sophia would be here’—She looked at her watch—‘Good God, how late it grows!—and how soon shall I be carried from most of those friends whom I used to imagine I would gladly be separated from for my Lord Osmond’s sake!’

To argue her out of this conflict I found would not answer; I therefore soothed her with every hope of the Marquis’s kindness, and assured her she would yet bless the exchange she made from their to his protection.

‘You have no cause, Julia,’ added I, ‘to harbour one uneasy thought. Take a retrospect of the past—Have you not made the duty of a child your first point of view? You obeyed its harsh dictates, though inclination sought to shake your constancy—you refused to marry Osmond clandestinely—you refused to read his letters—to write to him—to see him. Many of his friends and yours strove to reason away your pious objections to each article—they could not succeed—and still you loved him fervently—there lies the merit!—and behold how the Almighty hath rewarded you!—He gives you to him with the consent of your family, and through the supplication of his father—and, what is yet more, Osmond receives you impressed with the highest idea of your virtue—your discretion—and your attachment! Here is an excellent moral that will be of service to some unmarried ladies who may know your story.’

I begged not to interrupt her writing any longer. She finished her letter, whilst I stood at a window, viewing, with some sensations of melancholy, the expedition with which Lord Osmond’s and Lady Pemberton’s servants were fixing trunks, caravans, &c. &c. on a coach and chaise that were to convey the two female attendants and the valets to Peterborough. I could not refrain from dropping a tear at the notion of parting with my gentle, amiable friend, though for a short time.—Lord Osmond’s chaise drove to the door, out of which got Lord Mortimer and himself.

I told

I told Julia of it. She grew pale and red alternately—I really felt for her. Lord Mortimer entered her dressing-room—he caught her in his arms—he congratulated her in the warmest terms, and was as much transported, as if it was his bridal-day. ‘Oh that Westbrook was here!’ exclaimed he. ‘And Emily and Lady Caroline,’ added Julia.

‘You will see them when you return to town, my dear,’ cried I; ‘when your mind is more composed—when you can without allay join in the universal joy this happy event inspires your friends with.’ Lord Pemberton, Lord Beaumont, the Bishop of W—, and Mr. Montague, stepped from Lord Pemberton’s carriage, and in a few minutes after Lord Mortimer’s travelling coach brought Caroline, Lady Pemberton, Sir Charles, the nurse, and child. Mortimer went down to pay his compliments, and Lady D. Pemberton entered. She encouraged Julia to dispel her fears, and was endeavouring to rally her out of them, when Mournies appeared in a great bustle. She addressed herself to Lady Pemberton—

‘Madame, you have no idea wat my Lor have de cruelty to desire!—dat I will go away dis instant.’

‘To be sure, Mournies!’ said her Ladyship; ‘it is right to do so.’

‘Wat, go away, and no see my young Lady marry!—Ah, fie, Madame!—fi my Lor Pemberton have no humanité, you have, my Ledy!’

I entreated that she might stay—Julia took her hand—

‘Pray, Madam, let her be obliged!—Yes, Mournies—my mother consents—you must not be made uneasy.’

Her countenance brightened up; she stroked Julia’s hand, and viewed her with the same delight as if she was her daughter.

‘My Lor Osmond have une Belle Femme, Lady Louise; n’est ce pas vray?’

Mournies called Lady Pemberton aside, to consult with her about something relating to my friend’s ap-

parel—they left the room together, and in a few minutes Osmond tapped at the door. On his admission he threw himself at Julia's feet—he gazed on her with admiration—with rapture—and told her, that, before the celebration of the rite which made her his, he must in that posture swear, that every act of his life should result from his wish to please her—and if her happiness depended upon his affection, fidelity, and attention—that he would render it complete. Julia seemed to forget all anxiety the moment she beheld him; and such another man I believe no woman ever beheld. He looked exquisitely handsome; and it was a moot point, which object in their different style was most beautiful. He tried the ring upon her finger. 'Allow me to see,' cried he, 'whether it answers the measure I took last night.' It did exactly. He kissed it—

'What power lies in this diminutive golden circle! Soon will it destroy the existence of Julia Herbert, and give life to Julia Osmond!'

I asked her, if I should seal the letter she had written; for I supposed she would have little leisure to do it herself? She answered, I should have time enough after her departure. However, I seized the opportunity to retire to her closet, not doubting but the absence of a third person would be most agreeable to Lord Osmond.

In a little while she called to me—Lord Pemberton came to tell them that every one was ready, and waited for their appearance. He offered Julia his hand; Lord Osmond presented his to me; and we repaired to the drawing-room. As we went in, Lord Pemberton perceived Mournies and Souville—

'What here still!' exclaimed he; 'did I not desire you an hour since to be gone?'

'It is very true, my Lor,' replied she.

'And why was I not obeyed?'

'Because I must stay to see my Ledy marry. Monsieur Souville desire the same ting; after dat, we will go in one petit moment—have lile patience!'

He saw it was in vain to contend the matter; therefore gave it up. She treats them all without much ceremony, as she cannot divest herself of a notion, that they are mere children to her.

The Bishop, on Lord Pemberton's bowing to him, began the service. Julia's apprehensions returned—her varying cheek, and trembling form, denoted that they did; however, she went through the office better than I expected. As soon as the Bishop pronounced the nuptial benediction, and gave them joy, Lord Osmond with a bent knee kissed her hand, and uttered acknowledgments for her condescending goodness in agreeing on such short notice to bless him, and make his father's last moments easy. He wished the instant in which he ever forgot it, might be his last.

Every one saluted her, and made their congratulations to both. Lady Pemberton embraced them, and prayed for their felicity.

'Now,' cried the reverend Lord, 'I may boast of having joined the loveliest couple in the world!'

Lady Mortimer's fine eyes sparkled—

'Dear Madam,' addressing her mother, 'deign to acknowledge, in full assembly, that you forgive such of us as assisted Osmond to obtain that *prudish* girl!'

'Forgive ye, my dear! Indeed I repent of having opposed your measures and his happiness so long! And I declare, with the utmost sincerity, that I am now delighted at Julia's choice.'

When we had breakfasted, Sir Charles proposed setting out. We arose—Julia with tearful eyes threw herself into her mother's arms—She bid Almeria and Sophia adieu—She turned to me: 'Louisa—my dear Louisa, farewell!—The most joyful circumstances, I find, have their alloy.'

I wept and could make her no answer. The rest of the party embraced us. Mr. Montague took Lady Osmond's hand, and led her down. He put her in the chaise. Lord Osmond stepped in, and Fidele leaped after. They drove off; and Lady Mortimer's carriage succeeded theirs, into which Sir Charles handed her, and

and then followed, as did her brother and her husband. They were all out of sight in a minute, and carried my heart along with them.—You cannot imagine with what *ennui* we regarded each other. For my part, I felt as if I was abandoned by every one I loved. My Lord Bishop and Mr. Montague wished us a good morning, promising to dine in Portman-square. We prevailed on Lady Pemberton to take an airing, Lord Beaumont and I offering to attend her. As we were going to the coach, we met my brother, who I suppose contrived to dispel the gloom that was visible on the countenances of the sisters we had just left.

After passing two hours in the Park, I came home, and must now prepare to dress—Lady Pemberton insisted on my joining at dinner such of the party of this morning as remain in London. Lord Clermont will be with us.

I wonder how Suffolk will behave on hearing that Osmond is in possession of Julia. You abhor him, because he has been a source of misery to our charming friends; but as he can no longer interfere with their happiness, and as he must feel his disappointment very keenly, I am sure you will allow me to pity him.

I easily fancy your pleasure on receiving this account—it can only be equalled by my own, in transmitting it to you.

Commend me to Lady Caroline, and Sir James; and be convinced that I am, dear Lady Westbrook,

Your most affectionate

LOUISA MONTAGUE.

To Lady WESTBROOK.

Belfont, past nine o'Clock.

I Have left my husband to flirt with Julia—Lord Osmond is penning a letter of *high-flown* acknowledgments

ments (I presume) to my mother—Sir Charles is *lamenting* to Louisa his absence from her—Lord Pemberton, like a dutiful son, is recounting to my mother also the reception we have met with at this noble dwelling—and I, emulous to copy ‘such *attention* to *one’s* friends, in writing the instant *one* arrives from a long hurrying journey, (though *fatigued to death*,) have determined to address you, and give a specimen that I am as little deficient in point of politeness as the *elegants* I have mentioned.’ Is not this Mrs. Pelham’s style?

Louisa assured me that you should hear from her very fully by this night’s post; so that I need not give you a second view of the scene in London.

Osmond was apprehensive that Julia’s health and mine would suffer by travelling with so much speed, and without refreshment. We stopped for fresh horses at Baldock. He consulted with my three companions, whether he had not better alight for an hour at Biggleswade? They approved the motion; and he told one of the footmen to get on, and overtake the servant (whose office it was to prepare relays), and desire him to bespeak as good a dinner as could be procured in so short a time. We found every-thing ready and in tolerable order when we got there, which was about four o’clock. Julia seemed well, and her spirits composed. This delay impeded the progress we expected on leaving town to make in our journey, considerably—Dark, cold evenings are unfavourable for travelling—We did not reach Belfont till between eight and nine. On our entering the hall, we found it thronged with domestics, who were no doubt anxious to regain a sight of their young Lord, and catch a view of his bride.

To the Marquis’s eager enquiry about his father, many voices answered, ‘He is better, my Lord.’ We were conducted to a large apartment adjoining the hall, and were scarcely seated, when a venerable-looking man approached us; and, with a joy I cannot describe, welcomed Osmond, who seized his hand, and expressed
infinite

infinite satisfaction at seeing of him. He introduced him to Julia as a valued friend of his. You will judge in that character how graciously she received Freebourne! Sir Charles retired with him to the Duke's chamber. In a short space he returned, and said his Grace waited impatiently to behold Lord and Lady Osmond—'He entreats that your Ladyship,' added Sir Charles, addressing himself to me, 'Mortimer, and Pemberton, will also honour him with your presence.' Julia's colour fled. Osmond, attentive to every minute circumstance that concerns her, pressed her hand to his bosom, and besought her not to be alarmed.

'The Duke,' cried he, 'is totally metamorphosed—be composed, my love—I dare aver that you will like him after this interview!'

We ascended the stair-case. Poor Julia's limbs trembled I believe—I am sure mine did; and I would very gladly have dispensed with the *favour* of seeing his Grace.

Doctor W. met us at the door of a magnificent apartment. He said he was impatient to pay his respects to us. I was so terrified, I could only curtsy to him.

'Where is Osmond?' cried the Duke, with an anxious tone.

The Marquis led my sister towards the bed—they both dropped on their knees—and Osmond muttered something which I could not distinctly hear.

'Oh my son!' exclaimed the Duke—'my children—my dear children!—may Heaven bless you both—and pardon me!'

He kissed Julia—he held her in his arms more than a minute, and then embraced Osmond with the same fondness—He sobbed audibly, and was dreadfully agitated. At length he became serene—he entreated they would forgive his past criminal behaviour, since he had atoned for it as far as he was able.

They assured him that they remembered nothing but his kindness—he had rendered them the happiest of mortals, for which their gratitude was unutterable.

The

The Duke praised their generosity, in affording him the comfort of such an avowal. He declared the remaining part of his existence should be laid out in striving to oblige them, and in proving himself a tender and affectionate parent.

His Grace begged of us to draw near. He saluted my hand, and thanked me for my goodness in accompanying Julia and his son to Belfont. 'You have saved that lovely creature, Madam,' cried he, 'from a situation not calculated for one of her delicacy. Had she been left to the society of men only, in a strange habitation, circumstanced as she is, I should have felt for her extremely. By this instance of humanity to her, your Ladyship has conferred an obligation on me, which I shall never forget.'

The Duke acknowledged in warm terms his high sense of the favours Lord Pemberton and my mother had done him, in accepting of his concessions, and in granting his request; 'a request, my Lord,' added he, 'on which my life depended. All former animosities shall be buried in oblivion. From hence let us be on a foot of intimacy—let us have but one family. That boy and girl have tied a knot of friendship between our houses, which I trust will never be disunited! I swear, in the presence of Heaven, and of you all, to become a different man!'

You know Pemberton's disposition, my good Emily; that he is gentle as zephyr to all who are humbled by calamity, or a conviction of their errors. You will therefore suppose the polite, affectionate manner, in which he answered his Grace.

'The Duke took my Lord Mortimer's hand——

'You are attached to Harry, my Lord—for his sake, then, endeavour to esteem his father. I am grateful for the honour your Lordship does us in this visit!—Montague—my dear Montague—instruct me how to thank you sufficiently'——

'Not a word, my Lord, I beg, in that style!' cried Sir Charles. 'My ardent wishes are gratified, and

and hours of felicity await us all!—Certainly Doctor W. thinks your Grace is in need of some repose after this exertion!—Suffer us to retire.’

Doctor W. seconded the proposal.

‘A few words more—and I consent—Freebourne, bring me the packet I committed to your charge this evening.’

He was obeyed in an instant.

‘Sir Charles,’ said the Duke, ‘I made Mr. ——— work hard in your absence.’ He delivered the parcel into Julia’s hands. ‘Receive these papers, my dear Lady Osmond, in requital for the insolence with which I treated your amiable letter—and, when you give them to your husband, tell him to make his acknowledgments to *you*—they are your present to him, not mine. At my death I will bestow on him a similar one.’

Julia kissed his hand—‘My Lord, your kindness to me—such unmerited obligations—they quite oppress me—I cannot tell you’—and she burst into tears.

‘I do not wish you to do it, my child—try to love your father—it is all he asks.’

He again embraced her tenderly. Osmond threw himself on his knees, and with energy expressed his gratitude.

‘I tell you, Harry, I have done nothing for you—here your tribute is due’——And he put Julia’s hand into her Lord’s. With the other she presented him the packet, but was unable to speak. He clasped her to his bosom, and assured the Duke that the solicitude he had demonstrated to make them happy, was sensibly felt by both; and to evince themselves deserving of it, would be their united study.

His Grace took leave of us for the night, and desired Julia to be careful that her guests were well entertained.

Dear Emily, what stings of conscience did I endure on quitting his apartment, for the wicked petitions I formerly offered up respecting him!—I am in love with the Duke—I plainly perceive it is not entirely

ly from his mother Osmond inherits that fascinating address which many women's peace have fallen a victim to. When his father pleases, he can exert the same talent, I find, though in an inferior degree—but Osmond, with this faculty, owns every virtue and amiable quality.

On our return to the parlour, the Marquis, at Sir Charles's request, unsealed the packet. On the inside of the cover was written, in the Duke's own characters, the following lines :

' Enclosed is a Deed of Assignment to my son Henry Rivers, Marquis of Osmond, of my Dorsetshire and of my Berkshire estates. When I die, my Will possesses him of all I at present own in the world, excepting a few trifling legacies to my principal servants. This method I take to convince my dear Harry, that my penitence for what cannot be recalled is actual; and I trust his generosity will not allow him to harbour an idea, that my purposes of amendment will vanish with my illness. Another reason I have for making over to him the above estates is, that his bridal joys may not be imperfect from the apprehension of his dependence on me for the support of his admirable Julia in the style to which she has been accustomed, and to which she is entitled by every qualification.

' The house in St. James's-Square is Osmond's. If he and Lady Osmond chuse to reside in it, it shall be new furnished at my cost, directly, in the completest manner—if not, they are at liberty to sell it; and any other they approve of, I will have furnished equally.

' Jewels I mean to present my daughter with; but not to deter my son from doing the same, by mentioning this article.

' Notes for two thousand pounds are also enclosed, to defray his immediate expenses.

WESTMORLAND.

Judge,

Judge, my dear Emily, how penetrated the Marquis was at such an instance of the Duke's munificence. — He carried the paper to Julia —

'Now is every anxiety banished from my breast!' cried he: 'for my own sake, I despise wealth; but ready as you have ever been to accommodate your wishes to my scanty fortune, I must have been continually distressed at seeing you debarred of many gratifications, which, from our conversation this day, I perceive, your prudence would have deemed superfluous. Montague, Julia and I had determined never to make an application to my father for pecuniary assistance.'

Doctor W. appeared highly delighted at beholding our amiable couple. He reminded my sister of her illness at Windsor, and told her that he had often promised her happiness with *her Henry*, when she was incapable of knowing who spoke to her. He assures us the Duke will do well; and says, that, if he perseveres to shake off his disorder in the manner he has done within the last twenty-four hours, he might (with infinite caution) be removed to London in about a fortnight, to which place his Grace is very solicitous to get. This intelligence makes me very happy, as it will restore Julia and her Lord to their friends sooner than I expected.

Doctor W. is called to town. He sets out early in the morning, and has been so obliging as to offer to take our letters with him. Mine he is to dispatch to you by the post on his arrival.

Lord Osmond has entreated, that he may have the honour of seeing a person to whom he is so much indebted, whenever the Doctor can bestow a leisure hour on him; declaring, that to cultivate his further acquaintance, is an object he has much at heart. Doctor W. bowed, and answered him in a very complimentary strain.

Great as my affection is for my sister and Osmond, I cannot think of staying with them more than a week. I have a thousand anxieties about my poor little William; though I am satisfied that he experi-

ences

ences as much tenderness where he is, as he could do from me. My mother is all goodness—still I wish to be with him.—My brother, Sir Charles, and my Lord, will leave Belfont at the same time. —

I told Almeria, when I bade her adieu, that she certainly had a presentiment of this wedding, and assumed a convenient indisposition to avoid a few days separation from Lord Clermont.

She looked highly offended; and I flew from her *indignation*, which I dare say she was unjust enough to make him feel the first moment they met. However, she has in truth, a slight fever, that I trust we shall find her perfectly recovered of.

I hope to meet you, Sir James, and Lady Caroline, in London, when I arrive.

I am called to supper—so farewell, my dear Emily. I am,

Your most affectionate

CAROLINE MORTIMER.

F I N I S.

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